

BALLADS,
METRICAL TALES
AND
OTHER POEMS.

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Nos hæc novimus esse nihil.

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BALLADS AND METRICAL TALES.

RUDIGER.

Divers princes and noblemen being assembled in a beautiful and fair palace, which was situate upon the river Rhine, they beheld a boat or small barge make toward the shore, drawn by a swan in a silver chain, the one end fastened about her neck, the other to the vessel; and in it an unknown soldier, a man of a comely personage and graceful presence, who stept upon the shore, which done, the boat guided by the swan left him, and floated down the river. This man fell afterward in league with a fair gentlewoman, married her, and by her had many children. After some years, the same swan came with the same barge unto the same place; the soldier entering into it, was carried thence the way he came, left wife, children, and family, and was never seen amongst them after.

Now who can judge this to be other than one of those spirits that are named incubi? says Thomas Heywood. I have adopted this story, but not his solution, making the unknown soldier not an evil spirit, but one who had purchased happiness of a malevolent being, by the promised sacrifice of his first-born child.

BRIGHT on the mountain's heathy slope
The day's last splendours shine,
And rich with many a radiant hue,
Gleam gaily on the Rhine.

And many a one from Waldhurst's walls
Along the river strolled,
As ruffling o'er the pleasant stream
The evening gales came cold.

So as they strayed a swan they saw
Sail stately up and strong,
And by a silver chain she drew
A little boat along.

Whose streamer to the gentle breeze,
Long floating, fluttered light,
Beneath whose crimson canopy
There lay reclined a knight.

With arching crest and swelling breast
On sailed the stately swan,
And lightly up the parting tide
The little boat came on.

And onward to the shore they drew,
And leapt to land the knight,
And down the stream the little boat
Fell soon beyond the sight.

Was never a knight in Waldhurst's walls
Could with this stranger vie,
Was never youth at aught esteemed
When Rudiger was by.

Was never a maid in Waldhurst's walls
Might match with Margaret,
Her cheek was fair, her eyes were dark,
Her silken locks like jet.

And many a rich and noble youth
Had strove to win the fair,
But never a rich and noble youth
Could rival Rudiger.

At every tilt and tourney he
Still bore away the prize,
For knightly feats superior still
And knightly courtesies.

His gallant feats, his looks, his love,
Soon won the willing fair ;
And soon did Margaret become
The wife of Rudiger.

Like morning dreams of happiness
Fast rolled the months away ;
For he was kind and she was kind,
And who so blest as they ?

Yet Rudiger would sometimes sit
Absorbed in silent thought,
And his dark downward eye would seem
With anxious meaning fraught.

But soon he raised his looks again
And smiled his cares away,
And mid the hall of gaiety
Was none like him so gay.

And onward rolled the waning months,
The hour appointed came,
And Margaret her Rudiger
Hailed with a father's name

But silently did Rudiger
The little infant see ;
And darkly on the babe he gazed,—
A gloomy man was he.

And when to bless the little babe
The holy father came,
To cleanse the stains of sin away
In Christ's redeeming name,

Then did the cheek of Rudiger
Assume a death-pale hue,
And on his clammy forehead stood
The cold convulsive dew ;

And, faltering in his speech, he bade
The priest the rites delay,
Till he could, to right health restored,
Enjoy the festive day.

When o'er the many-tinted sky
He saw the day decline,
He called upon his Margaret
To walk beside the Rhine.—

“ And we will take the little babe,
For soft the breeze that blows,
And the mild murmurs of the stream
Will lull him to repose.”

And so together forth they went,
The evening breeze was mild,
And Rudiger upon his arm
Pillowed the little child.

And many a one from Waldhurst's walls
Along the banks did roam,
But soon the evening wind came cold,
And all betook them home.

Yet Rudiger in silent mood
Along the banks would roam,
Nor aught could Margaret prevail
To turn his footsteps home.

“ Oh turn thee, turn thee, Rudiger,
The rising mists behold,
The evening wind is damp and chill,
The little babe is cold ! ”

“ Now hush thee, hush thee, Margaret,
The mists will do no harm,
And from the wind the little babe,
Lies sheltered on my arm.”

“ Oh turn thee, turn thee, Rudiger,
 Why onward wilt thou roam ?
 The moon is up, the night is cold,
 And we are far from home.”

He answered not ; for now he saw
 A swan come sailing strong,
 And by a silver chain she drew
 A little boat along.

To shore they came, and to the boat
 Fast leapt he with the child,
 And in leapt Margaret—breathless now,
 And pale with fear, and wild.

With arching crest and swelling breast
 On sailed the stately swan,
 And lightly down the rapid tide
 The little boat went on.

The full-orbed moon, that beamed around
 Pale splendour through the night,
 Cast through the crimson canopy
 A dim-discoloured light.

And swiftly down the hurrying stream
 In silence still they sail,
 And the long streamer fluttering fast
 Flapped to the heavy gale.—

And he was mute in solemn thought,
 And she was mute with fear,
 Nor sound but of the parting tide
 Broke on the listening ear.

The little babe began to cry,
 Then Margaret raised her head,
 And with a quick and hollow voice
 “ Give me the child,” she said.

“ Now hush thee, hush thee, Margaret,
Nor my poor heart distress—
I do but pay perforce the price
Of former happiness.

“ And hush thee too, my little babe !
Thy cries so feeble cease :
Lie still, lie still ;—a little while
And thou shalt be at peace.”

So as he spake to land they drew,
And swift he stept on shore,
And him behind did Margaret
Close follow evermore.

It was a place all desolate,
Nor house nor tree was there,
And there a rocky mountain rose,
Barren, and bleak, and bare.

And at its base a cavern yawned,
No eye its depth might view,
For in the moon-beam shining round
That darkness darker grew.

Cold horror crept through Margaret's blood,
Her heart it paused with fear,
When Rudiger approached the cave,
And cried, “ Lo, I am here !”

A deep sepulchral sound the cave
Returned, “ Lo, I am here !”
And black from out the cavern gloom
Two giant arms appear.

And Rudiger approached, and held
The little infant nigh ;
Then Margaret shrieked, and gathered then
New powers from agony.

And round the baby fast and close
Her trembling arms she folds,
And with a strong convulsive grasp
The little infant holds.

‘Now, help me, Jesus!’ loud she cries,
And loud on God she calls;
Then from the grasp of Rudiger
The little infant falls.

And loud he shrieked, for now his frame
The huge black arms clasped round,
And dragged the wretched Rudiger
Adown the dark profound.

MARY.

The story of the following ballad was related to me, when a school-boy, as a fact which had happened in the north of England. I have adopted the metre of Mr. Lewis’s *Alonzo and Imogene*—a poem deservedly popular. The ballad, however little valuable in itself, derives a value now from having been made the subject of one of Mr. Barker’s pictures.

Who is yonder poor maniac, whose wildly-fixed eyes
Seem a heart overcharged to express?
She weeps not, yet often and deeply she sighs:
She never complains, but her silence implies
The composure of settled distress.

II.

No aid, no compassion, the maniac will seek;
Cold and hunger awake not her care:
Through her rags do the winds of the winter blow bleak
On her poor withered bosom, half bare, and her cheek
Hath the deathly pale hue of despair.

III.

Yet cheerful and happy, nor distant the day,
 Poor Mary the maniac has been ;
The traveller remembers, who journeyed this way,
No damsel so lovely, no damsel so gay,
 As Mary the Maid of the Inn.

IV.

Her cheerful address filled her guests with delight,
 As she welcomed them in with a smile ;
Her heart was a stranger to childish affright,
And Mary would walk by the abbey at night
 When the wind whistled down the dark aisle.

V.

She loved, and young Richard had settled the day,
 And she hoped to be happy for life :
But Richard was idle and worthless, and they
Who knew him would pity poor Mary, and say
 That she was too good for his wife.

VI.

'Twas in autumn, and stormy and dark was the night,
 And fast were the windows and door ;
Two guests, sat enjoying the fire that burnt bright,
And, smoking in silence, with tranquil delight
 They listened to hear the wind roar.

VII.

" 'Tis pleasant," cried one, " seated by the fire-side
 To hear the wind whistle without."
"A fine night for the abbey !" his comrade replied.
"Methinks a man's courage would now be well tried
 Who should wander the ruins about."

VIII.

"I myself, like a school-boy, should tremble to hear
The hoarse ivy shake over my head ;
And could fancy I saw, half persuaded by fear,
Some ugly old abbot's white spirit appear,
For this wind might awaken the dead !"

IX.

"I'll wager a dinner," the other one cried,
"That Mary would venture there now."
"Then wager and lose !" with a sneer he replied.
"I'll warrant she'd fancy a ghost by her side,
And faint if she saw a white cow."

X.

"Will Mary this charge on her courage allow ?"
His companion exclaimed with a smile ;
"I shall win,—for I know she will venture there now,
And earn a new bonnet by bringing a bough
From the elder that grows in the aisle."

XI.

With fearless good humour did Mary comply,
And her way to the abbey she bent ;
The night it was dark, and the wind it was high,
And as hollowly howling it swept through the sky
She shivered with cold as she went.

XII.

O'er the path so well known still proceeded the maid,
Where the abbey rose dim on the sight.
Through the gate-way she entered, she felt not afraid ;
Yet the ruins were lonely and wild, and their shade
Seemed to deepen the gloom of the night.

XIII.

All around her was silent, save when the rude blast
Howled dismally round the old pile ;
Over weed-covered fragments still fearless she past,
And arrived at the innermost ruin at last
Where the elder-tree grew in the aisle.

XIV.

Well-pleased did she reach it,*and quickly drew near
And hastily gathered the bough ;
When the sound of a voice seemed to rise on her ear,
She paused, and she listened, all eager to hear,
And her heart panted fearfully now.

XV.

The wind blew, the hoarse ivy shook over her head,
She listened,—nought else could she hear ;
The wind ceased, her heart sunk in her bosom with
dread,
For she heard in the ruins distinctly the tread
Of footsteps approaching her near.

XVI.

Behind a wide column, half breathless with fear,
She crept to conceal herself there :
That instant the moon o'er a dark cloud shone clear,
And she saw in the moonlight two ruffians appear,
And between them a corpse did they bear.

XVII.

Then Mary could feel her heart-blood curdle cold !
Again the rough wind hurried by,—
It blew off the hat of the one, and behold
Even close to the feet of poor Mary it rolled—
She fell, and expected to die.

XVIII.

“Curse the hat !” he exclaims. “Nay, come on here,
and hide
The dead body,” his comrade replies.
She in safety beholds them pass on by her side,—
She seizes the hat, fear her courage supplied,
And fast through the abbey she flies.

XIX.

She ran with wild speed, she rushed in at the door,
She gazed horribly eager around,
Then her limbs could support their faint burthen no
more,
And, exhausted and breathless, she sunk on the floor
Unable to utter a sound.

XX.

Ere yet her pale lips could the story impart,
For a moment the hat met her view ;—
Her eyes from that object convulsively start,
For—O God ! what cold horror then thrilled through
her heart
When the name of her Richard she knew !

XXI.

Where the old abbey stands, on the common hard by,
His gibbet is now to be seen ;
His irons you still from the road may espy,
The traveller beholds them, and thinks with a sigh
Of poor Mary the maid of the inn.

DONICA.

In Finland there is a castle which is called the New Rock, moated about with a river of unsounded depth, the water black, and the fish therein very distasteful to the palate. In this are spectres often seen, which foreshow either the death of the governor, or some prime officer belonging to the place; and most commonly it appeareth in the shape of a harper, sweetly singing and dallying and playing under the water.

It is reported of one Donica, that after she was dead, the devil walked in her body for the space of two years, so that none suspected but she was still alive; for she did both speak and eat, though very sparingly; only she had a deep paleness on her countenance, which was the only sign of death. At length a magician coming by where she was then in the company of many other virgins, as soon as he beheld her he said, "Fair maids, why keep you company with this dead virgin, whom you suppose to be alive?" when taking away the magic charm which was tied under her arm, the body fell down lifeless and without motion.

The following ballad is founded on these stories. They are to be found in the notes to "The Hierarchies of the Blessed Angels; a Poem by Thomas Heywood, printed in folio by Adam Islip, 1635."

High on a rock, whose castled shade
Darkened the lake below,
In ancient strength majestic stood
The towers of Arlinkow.

The fisher in the lake below
Durst never cast his net,
Nor ever swallow in its waves
Her passing wings would wet.

The cattle from its ominous banks
In wild alarm would run,
Though parched with thirst, and faint beneath
The summer's scorching sun.

For sometimes, when no passing breeze
The long lank sedges waved,
All white with foam and heaving high
Its deafening billows raved ;

And when the tempest from its base
The rooted pine would shake,
The powerless storm unruffled swept
Across the calm dead lake.

And ever then when death drew near
The house of Arlinkow,
Its dark unfathomed depths did send
Strange music from below.

The Lord of Arlinkow was old,
One only child had he,
Donica was the maiden's name,
As fair as fair might be.

A bloom as bright as opening morn
Flushed o'er her clear white cheek ;
The music of her voice was mild,
Her full dark eyes were meek.

Far was her beauty known, for none
So fair could Finland boast ;
Her parents loved the maiden much,—
Young Eberhard loved her most.

Together did they hope to tread
The pleasant path of life,
For now the day drew near to make
Donica Eberhard's wife.

The eve was fair, and mild the air,
Along the lake they stray ;
The eastern hill reflected bright
The fading tints of day.

And brightly o'er the water streamed
The liquid radiance wide ;
Donica's little dog ran on
And gamboled at her side.

Youth, health, and love, bloomed on her cheek,
Her full dark eyes express
In many a glance to Eberhard
Her soul's meek tenderness.

Nor sound was heard, nor passing gale
Sighed through the long lank sedge ;
The air was hushed, no little wave
Dimpled the water's edge.

Sudden the unfathomed lake sent forth
Strange music from beneath,
And slowly o'er the waters sailed
The solemn sounds of death.

As the deep sounds of death arose,
Donica's cheek grew pale,
And in the arms of Eberhard
The senseless maiden fell.

Loudly the youth in terror shrieked,
And loud he called for aid,
And with a wild and eager look
Gazed on the death-pale maid.

But soon again did better thoughts
In Eberhard arise,
And he with trembling hope beheld
The maiden raise her eyes.

And on his arm reclined, she moved
With feeble pace and slow,
And soon with strength recovered reached
The towers of Arlinkow.

Yet never to Donica's cheek
Returned the lively hue !
Her cheeks were deathly white and wan,
Her lips a livid blue.

Her eyes, so bright and black of yore,
Were now more black and bright ;
And beamed strange lustre in her face,
So deadly wan and white.

The dog that gamboled by her side,
And loved with her to stray,
Now at his altered mistress howled,
And fled in fear away.

Yet did the faithful Eberhard
Not love the maid the less !
He gazed with sorrow, but he gazed
With deeper tenderness.

And when he found her health unharmed
He would not brook delay,
But pressed the not unwilling maid
To fix the bridal day.

And when at length it came, with joy
They hailed the bridal day,
And onward to the house of God
They went their willing way.

And as they at the altar stood
And heard the sacred rite,
The hallowed tapers dimly streamed
A pale sulphureous light.

And as the youth with holy warmth
Her hand in his did hold,
Sudden he felt Donica's hand
Grow deadly damp and cold.

And loudly did he shriek, for lo !
A spirit met his view,
And Eberhard in the angel form
His own Donica knew.

That instant from her earthly frame
Howling the demon fled,
And at the side of Eberhard
The livid form fell dead.

LORD WILLIAM.

No eye beheld when William plunged
Young Edmund in the stream ;
No human ear but William's heard
Young Edmund's drowning scream.

Submissive all the vassals own'd
The murderer for their lord ;
And he, the rightful heir, possessed
The house of Erlingford.

The ancient house of Erlingford
Stood in a fair domain,
And Severn's ample waters near,
Roll'd through the fertile plain.

And often the wayfaring man
Would love to linger there,
Forgetful of his onward road,
To gaze on scene so fair.

But never could Lord William dare
To gaze on Severn's stream ;
In every wind that swept its waves
He heard young Edmund's scream.

In vain at midnight's silent hour
Sleep closed the murderer's eyes—
In every dream the murderer saw
Young Edmund's form arise.

In vain, by restless conscience driven,
Lord William left his home,
Far from the scenes that saw his guilt,
In pilgrimage to roam.

To other climes the pilgrim fled,
But could not fly despair ;
He sought his home again, but peace
Was still a stranger there.

Each hour was tedious long, yet swift
The months appear'd to roll ;
And now the day returned that shook
With terror William's soul.

A day that William never felt
Return without dismay ;
For well had conscience calendared
Young Edmund's dying day.

A fearful day was that ! the rains
Fell fast with tempest roar ;
And the swoln tide of Severn spread
Far on the level shore.

In vain Lord William sought the feast,
In vain he quaff'd the bowl ;
And strove with noisy mirth to drown
The anguish of his soul.

The tempest, as its sudden swell
In gusty howlings came,
With cold and death-like feelings seem'd
To thrill his shuddering frame.

Reluctant now, as night came on,
His lonely couch he press'd ;
And wearied out, he sunk to sleep,
To sleep, but not to rest.

Beside that couch his brother's form—
Lord Edmund—seem'd to stand,
Such and so pale as when in death
He grasp'd his brother's hand :

Such and so pale his face as when,
With faint and faltering tongue,
To William's care, a dying charge,
He left his orphan son.

“I bade thee with a father's love
My orphan Edmund guard ;
Well, William, has thou kept thy charge !
Now take thy due reward.”

He started up, each limb convuls'd
With agonizing fear ;
He only heard the storm of night—
'T was music to his ear.

When lo ! the voice of loud alarm
His inmost soul appals—
“What ho ! Lord William, rise in haste !
'The water saps thy walls !”

He rose in haste—beneath the walls
He saw the flood appear,
It hemm'd him round—'t was midnight now,
No human aid was near.

He heard the shout of joy, for now
A boat approach'd the wall,
And eager to the welcome aid
They crowd for safety all.

"My boat is small," the boatman cried ;
"T will bear but one away ;
Come in, Lord William, and do ye
In God's protection stay."

Strange feeling fill'd them at his voice,
Even in that hour of woe,
That, save their lord, there was not one
Who wish'd with him to go.

But William leapt into the boat,
His terror was so sore :
"Thou shalt have half my gold," he cried ;
"Haste, haste to yonder shore."

The boatman plied the oar—the boat
Went light along the stream—
Sudden Lord William heard a cry
Like Edmund's drowning scream.

The boatman paus'd : "Methought I heard
A child's distressful cry !"
"T was but the howling wind of night,"
Lord William made reply.

"Haste, haste, ply swift and strong the oar !
Haste, haste, across the stream !"
Again Lord William heard a cry
Like Edmund's drowning scream.

"I heard a child's distressful scream,"
The boatman cried again ;
"Nay, hasten on—the night is dark—
And we should search in vain."

“Oh God! Lord William, dost thou know
How dreadful 'tis to die?
And canst thou without pity hear
A child's expiring cry?

“How terrible it is to sink
Beneath the chilly stream;
To stretch the powerless arms in vain—
In vain for help to scream!”

The shriek again was heard—it came
More deep, more piercing loud:
That instant o'er the flood the moon
Shone through a broken cloud;

And near them they beheld a child,
Upon a crag he stood—
A little crag—and all around
Was spread the rising flood.

The boatman plied the oar—the boat
Approach'd his resting-place—
The moon-beam shone upon the child,
And show'd how pale his face.

“Now reach thine hand!” the boatman cried:
“Lord William, reach and save!”
The child stretch'd forth his little hands,
To grasp the hand he gave.

Then William shriek'd—the hand he touch'd
Was cold and damp and dead!
He felt young Edmund in his arms
A heavier weight than lead.

The boat sunk down—the murderer sunk
Beneath the avenging stream;
He rose, he scream'd—no human ear
Heard William's drowning scream.

JASPAR.

JASPAR was poor, and vice and want
Had made his heart like stone,
And Jaspas look'd with envious eyes
On riches not his own.

On plunder bent abroad he went
Towards the close of day;
And loitered on the lonely road,
Impatient for his prey.

No traveller came, he loiter'd long
And often look'd around,
And paus'd and listen'd eagerly
To catch some coming sound.

He sat him down beside the stream
That crossed the lonely way,
So fair a scene might well have charm'd
All evil thoughts away :

He sat beneath a willow tree,
That cast a trembling shade,
The gentle river full in front
A little island made,

Where pleasantly the moon-beam shone
Upon the poplar trees,
Whose shadow on the stream below
Play'd slowly to the breeze.

He listened—and he heard the wind
That waved the willow tree,
He heard the waters flow along
And murmur quietly.

He listen'd for the traveller's tread,
The nightingale sung sweet,—
He started up, for now he heard
The sound of coming feet.

He started up and graspt a stake,
And waited for his prey ;
There came a lonely traveller,
And Jaspar crost his way.

But Jaspar's threats and curses fail'd
The traveller to appal,
He would not lightly yield the purse
That held his little all.

Awhile he struggled, but he strove
With Jaspar's strength in vain ;
Beneath his blows he fell and groan'd,
And never spoke again.

He lifted up the murdered man,
And plunged him in the flood ;
And in the running water then
He cleansed his hands from blood.

The waters closed around the corpse,
And cleansed his hands from gore,
The willow waved, the stream flowed on
And murmured as before.

There was no human eye had seen
The blood the murderer spilt,
And Jaspar's conscience never knew
The avenging goad of guilt.

And soon the ruffian had consum'd
The gold he gain'd so ill,
And years of secret guilt pass'd on,
And he was needy still.

One eve beside the alehouse fire
He sat, as it befell,
When in there came a labouring man
Whom Jaspar knew full well.

He sat him down by Jaspar's side,
A melancholy man,
For spite of honest toil, the world
Went hard with Jonathan.

His toil a little earn'd, and he
With little was content ;
But sickness on his wife had fallen,
And all he had was spent.

Then with his wife and little ones
He shared the scanty meal,
And saw their looks of wretchedness,
And felt what wretches feel.

That very morn the landlord's power
Had seized the little left,
And now the sufferer found himself
Of every thing bereft.

He leant his head upon his hand,
His elbow on his knee,
And so by Jaspar's side he sat
And not a word said he.

"Nay—why so downcast?" Jaspar cried,
"Come—cheer up, Jonathan!
Drink, neighbour, drink! 'twill warm thy heart,—
Come, come! take courage, man!"

He took the cup that Jaspar gave,
And down he drain'd it quick ;
"I have a wife," said Jonathan,
And she is deadly sick.

“ She has no bed to lie upon,
I saw them take her bed :—
And I have children—would to God
That they and I were dead !

“ Our landlord he goes home to-night,
And he will sleep in peace—
I would that I were in my grave,
For there all troubles cease.

“ In vain I pray’d him to forbear,
Though wealth enough has he !
God be to him as merciless
As he has been to me !”

When Jaspar saw the poor man’s soul
On all his ill intent,
He plied him with the heartening cup,
And with him forth he went.

“ This landlord on his homeward road
’Twere easy now to meet.
The road is lonesome, Jonathan !—
And vengeance, man ! is sweet.”

He listen’d to the tempter’s voice,
The thought it made him start ;
His head was hot, and wretchedness
Had hardened now his heart.

Along the lonely road they went,
And waited for their prey ;
They sat them down beside the stream
That crossed the lonely way.

They sat them down beside the stream,
And never a word they said ;
They sat and listen’d silently
To hear the traveller’s tread.

The night was calm, the night was dark,
No star was in the sky,
The wind it waved the willow boughs,
The stream flowed quietly.

The night was calm, the air was still,
Sweet sung the nightingale,
The soul of Jonathan was sooth'd,
His heart began to fail.

" 'Tis weary waiting here," he cried,
" And now the hour is late,—
Methinks he will not come to-night,
'Tis uselses more to wait."

" Have patience, man ! " the ruffian said,
" A little we may wait,
But longer shall his wife expect
Her husband at the gate."

Then Jonathan grew sick at heart,
" My conscience yet is clear,
Jaspar—it is not yet too late—
I will not linger here."

" How now ! " cried Jaspar, " why, I thought
Thy conscience was asleep.
No more such qualms, the night is dark,
The river here is deep."

" What matters that," said Jonathan,
Whose blood began to freeze,
" When there is One above whose eye
The deeds of darkness sees ? " .

" We are safe enough," said Jaspar then,
" If that be all thy fear ;
Nor eye below, nor eye above
Can pierce the darkness here."

That instant, as the murderer spake,
There came a sudden light ;
Strong as the mid-day sun it shone,
Though all around was night.

It hung upon the willow tree,
It hung upon the flood,
It gave to view the poplar isle,
And all the scene of blood.

The traveller who journeys there,
He surely has espied
A madman who has made his home
Upon the river's side.

His cheek is pale, his eye is wild,
His look bespeaks despair ;
For Jaspar since that hour has made
His home unshelter'd there.

And fearful are his dreams at night,
And dread to him the day ;
He thinks upon his untold crime,
And never dares to pray.

The summer suns, the winter storms,
O'er him unheeded roll,
For heavy is the weight of blood
Upon the maniac's soul.

THE CROSS ROADS.

THERE was an old man breaking stones
To mend the turnpike way ;
He sate him down beside a brook,
And out his bread and cheese he took,
For now it was mid-day.

- He leant his back against a post,
His feet the brook ran by ;
And there were water-cresses growing,
And pleasant was the water's flowing,
• For he was hot and dry.

A soldier with his knapsack on
Came travelling o'er the down :
The sun was strong and he was tired ;
And he of the old man inquired
How far to Bristol town.

- “ Half an hour's walk for a young man,
By lanes and fields and stiles ;
But you the foot-path do not know,
And if along the road you go,
Why then 'tis three good miles.”

The soldier took his knapsack off,
For he was hot and dry ;
And out his bread and cheese he took,
And he sat down beside the brook
To dine in company.

- “ Old friend ! in faith,” the soldier says,
“ I envy you almost ;
My shoulders have been sorely prest
And I should like to sit and rest
My back against that post.

- “ In such a sweltering day as this
A knapsack is the devil !
And if on t'other side I sate,
It would not only spoil our chat,
But make me seem uncivil.”

The old man laugh'd and moved—“ I wish
It were a great-arm'd chair !

- But this may help a man at need !
And yet it was a cursed deed
That ever brought it there.

“ There’s a poor girl lies buried here
Beneath this very place.
The earth upon her corpse is prest,
The stake is driven into her breast,
And a stone is on her face.”

The soldier had but just leant back,
And now he half rose up.
“ There’s sure no harm in dining here,
My friend ! and yet, to be sincere,
I should not like to sup.”

“ God rest her ! she is still enough
Who sleeps beneath my feet !”
The old man cried. “ No harm I trow
She ever did herself, though now
She lies where four roads meet.

“ I have past by about that hour
When men are not most brave,
It did not make my heart to fail,
And I have heard the nightingale
Sing sweetly on her grave.

“ I have past by about that hour
When ghosts their freedom have ;
But there was nothing here to fright,
And I have seen the glow-worm’s light
Shine on the poor girl’s grave.

“ There’s one who like a Christian lies
Beneath the church-tree’s shade ;
I’d rather go a long mile round,
Than pass at evening through the ground
Wherein that man is laid.

“ There’s one who in the churchyard lies
For whom the bell did toll ;
He lies in consecrated ground,
But for all the wealth in Bristol town
I would not be with his soul !

- “ Did’st see a house below the hill,
Which the winds and the rains destroy ?
’Twas then a farm where he did dwell,
And I remember it full well
When I was a growing boy.
- “ And she was a poor parish girl,
Who came up from the west ;
From service hard she ran away,
And at that house in evil day
Was taken in to rest.
- “ The man he was a wicked man,
And an evil life he led ;
Rage made his cheek grow deadly white,
And his gray eyes were large and light,
And in anger they grew red.
- “ The man was bad, the mother worse,
Bad fruit of a bad stem,
’Twould make your hair to stand on-end
If I should tell to you, my friend,
The things that were told of them !
- “ Did’st see an out-house standing by ?
The walls alone remain ;
It was a stable then, but now
Its mossy roof has fallen through,
All rotted by the rain.
- “ The poor girl she had serv’d with them
Some half-a-year, or more,
When she was found hung up one day,
Stiff as corpse and cold as clay,
Behind that stable door !
- “ It is a wild and lonesome place,
No hut or house is near ;
Should one meet a murderer there alone
’Twere vain to scream, and the dying groan
Would never reach mortal ear.

“ And there were strange reports about ;
But still the coroner found
That she by her own hand had died,
And should buried be by the way side,
And not in Christian ground.

“ This was the very place he chose,
Just where these four roads met ;
And I was one among the throng
That hither followed them along,—
I shall never the sight forget !

“ They carried her upon a board,
In the clothes in which she died ;
I saw the cap blow off her head,
Her face was of a dark dark red,
Her eyes were starting wide :

“ I think they could not have been closed,
So widely did they strain ;
I never saw so dreadful a sight,
And it often made me wake at night,
For I saw her face again.

“ They laid her here where four roads meet,
Beneath this very place.
The earth upon her corpse was prest,
This post is driven into her breast,
And a stone is on her face.”

THE SAILOR WHO HAD SERVED IN THE
SLAVE-TRADE.

In September, 1798, a dissenting minister of Bristol discovered a sailor in the neighbourhood of that city, groaning and praying in a hovel. The circumstance that occasioned his agony of mind is detailed in the annexed ballad, without the slightest addition or alteration. By presenting it as a poem, the story is made more public, and such stories ought to be made as public as possible.

HE stopt,—it surely was a groan
That from the hovel came!
He stopt and listened anxiously,
Again it sounds the same.

From yonder hovel sure it came,—
And now he hastens there,
And thence he hears the name of Christ
Amid a broken prayer.

And entering in the outhouse then,
A sailor there he sees,
His hands were lifted up to Heaven,
And he was on his knees.

Nor did the sailor so intent
His entering footsteps heed,
But now the Lord's prayer said, and now
His half-forgotten creed.

And often on his Saviour called
With many a bitter groan,
And in such anguish as could spring
From deepest guilt alone.

He ask'd the miserable man .
 Why he was kneeling there,
 And what the crime had been that caus'd
 The anguish of his prayer.

" Oh, I have done a cursed thing !
 It haunts me night and day,
 And I have sought this lonely place
 Here undisturbed to pray.

" I have no place to pray on board, "
 So I came here alone,
 That I might freely kneel and pray,
 And call on Christ and groan.

" If to the main-mast head I go,
 The wicked one is there,
 From place to place, from rope to rope,
 He follows everywhere.

" I shut my eyes,—it matters not—
 Still, still the same I see,—
 And when I lay me down at night,
 'Tis always day with me.

" He follows, follows everywhere,
 And every place is hell !
 O God—and I must go with him
 In endless fire to dwell.

" He follows, follows everywhere,
 He's still above—below,
 Oh tell me where to fly from him !
 Oh tell me where to go !"

" But tell me," quoth the stranger then,
 " What this thy crime hath been,
 So haply I may comfort give
 To one that grieves for sin."

- " O I have done a cursed deed !"
 'The wretched man replies,
 " And night and day, and everywhere,
 'Tis still before my eyes.
- " I sail'd on board a Guinea-man,
 And to the slave-coast went ;
 Would that the sea had swallowed me
 When I was innocent !
- " And we took in our cargo there,
 Three hundred negro slaves,
 And we sail'd homeward merrily
 Over the ocean waves.
- " But some were sulky of the slaves,
 And would not touch their meat,
 So therefore we were forced by threats
 And blows to make them eat.
- " One woman, sulkier than the rest,
 Would still refuse her food,—
 O Jesus God ! I hear her cries—
 I see her in her blood !
- " The captain made me tie her up,
 And flog while he stood by,
 And then he curs'd me if I staid
 My hand to hear her cry.
- " She groan'd, she shriek'd—I could not spare,
 For the captain he stood by—
 Dear God ! that I might rest one night
 From that poor woman's cry.
- " She twisted from the blows—her blood,
 Her mangled flesh I see—
 And still the captain would not spare—
 Oh, he was worse than me !

“ She could not be more glad than I
 When she was taken down,
 A blessed minute ! ’twas the last
 That I have ever known ?

“ I did not close my eyes all night
 Thinking what I had done ;
 I heard her groans, and they grew faint,
 About the rising sun.

“ She groan’d and groan’d, but her groans grew
 Fainter at morning tide,
 Fainter and fainter still they came,
 Till at the noon she died.

“ They flung her overboard ;—poor wretch !
 She rested from her pain,—
 But when—O Christ ! O blessed God !
 Shall I have rest again !

“ I saw the sea close over her,
 Yet she is still in sight ;
 I see her twisting everywhere ;
 I see her day and night.

“ Go where I will, do what I can,
 The wicked one I see—
 Dear Christ, have mercy on my soul,
 O God, deliver me ! ”

A BALLAD

SHOWING HOW AN OLD WOMAN RODE DOUBLE, AND
WHO RODE BEFORE HER.

THE raven croak'd as she sate at her meal,
And the old woman knew what he said,
And she grew pale at the raven's tale,
And sicken'd and went to her bed.

"Now fetch me my children, and fetch them with
speed,"
The old woman of Berkeley said,
"The monk my son, and my daughter the nun,
Bid them hasten or I shall be dead."

The monk her son, and her daughter the nun,
Their way to Berkeley went,
And they have brought with pious thought
The holy sacrament.

The old woman shriek'd as they entered her door.
'Twas fearful her shrieks to hear,
"Now take the sacrament away
For mercy, my children dear!"

Her lip it trembled with agony,
The sweat ran down her brow,
"I have tortures in store for evermore,
Oh! spare me, my children, now!"

Away they sent the sacrament,
The fit it left her weak,
She look'd at her children with ghastly eyes
And faintly struggled to speak.

“ All kind of sin I have rioted in ;
And the judgment now must be,
But I secured my children's souls,
Oh ! pray my children for me.

“ I have suck'd the breath of sleeping babes,
The fiends have been my slaves,
I have 'nointed myself with infants' fat,
And feasted on rifled graves.

“ And the Devil will fetch me now in fire
My witchcrafts to atone,
And I who have rifled the dead man's grave
Shall never have rest in my own.

“ Bless, I intreat, my winding-sheet,
My children I beg of you !
And with holy water sprinkle my shroud,
And sprinkle my coffin too.

“ And let me be chain'd in my coffin of stone,
And fasten it strong, I implore,
With iron bars, and with three chains
Chain it to the church floor.

“ And bless the chains and sprinkle them,
And let fifty priests stand round,
Who night and day the mass may say
Where I lie on the ground.

“ And see that fifty choristers
Beside the bier attend me,
And day and night by the taper's light
With holy hymns defend me.

“ Let the church bells all, both great and small,
Be toll'd by night and day,
To drive from thence the fiends who come
To bear my body away.

“ And ever have the church door barr’d
After the even song ;
And I beseech you, children dear,
Let the bars and bolts be strong.

“ And let this be three days and nights
My wretched corpse to save,
Keep me so long from the fiendish throng,
And then I may rest in my grave.”

The old woman of Berkeley laid her down
And her eyes drew deadly dim,
Short came her breath and the struggle of death
Did loosen every limb.

They blest the old woman’s winding-sheet
With rites and prayers due,
With holy water they sprinkled her shroud,
And they sprinkled her coffin too.

And they chain’d her in her coffin of stone,
And with iron barr’d it down,
And in the church with three strong chains
They chain’d it to the ground.

And they blest the chains and sprinkled them,
And fifty priests stood round,
By night and day the mass to say
Where she lay on the ground.

And fifty sacred choristers
Beside the bier attend her,
Who, day and night, by the tapers’ light,
Should with holy hymns defend her.

To see the priest and choristers
It was a goodly sight,
Each holding, as it were a staff,
A taper burning bright.

And the church bells all, both great and small,
Did toll so loud and long,
And they have barr'd the church door hard,
After the even song.

And the first night the taper's light
Burnt steadily and clear,
But they without a hideous rout
Of angry fiends could hear ;

A hideous roar at the church door
Like a long thunder peal,
And the priests they pray'd and the choristers sung
Louder in fear'ul zeal.

Loud toll'd the bell, the priests pray'd well,
The tapers they burnt bright,
The monk her son, and her daughter the nun,
They told their beads all night.

The cock he crew, away they flew
The fiends from the herald of day ;
And undisturb'd the choristers sing,
And the fifty priests they pray.

The second night the taper's light
— Burnt dismally and blue,
And every one saw his neighbour's face
Like a dead man's face to view.

And yells and cries without arise
That the stoutest heart might shock,
And a deafening roar like a cataract pouring
Over a mountain rock.

The monk and nun they told their beads
As fast as they could tell,
And aye as louder grew the noise
The faster went the bell.

Louder and louder the choristers sung
As they trembled more and more,
And the fifty priests prayed to heaven for aid,
They never had prayed so before.

The cock he crew, away they flew
The fiends from the herald of day,
And undisturb'd the choristers sing
And the fifty priests they pray.

The third night, came and the tapers' flame
A hideous stench did make,
And they burnt as though they had been dipt
In the burning brimstone lake.

And the loud commotion, like the rushing of ocean,
Grew momentarily more and more,
And strokes as of a battering ram
Did shake the strong church door.

The bellmen they for very fear
Could toll the bell no longer,
And still as louder grew the strokes
Their fear it grew the stronger.

The monk and nun forgot their beads,
They fell on the ground dismay'd,
There was not a single saint in heaven
Whom they did not call to aid.

And the choristers' song that late was so strong
Grew a quaver of consternation,
For the church did rock as an earthquake shock
Uplifted its foundation.

And a sound was heard like the trumpet's blast
That shall one day wake the dead ;
The strong church door could bear no more,
And the bolts and the bars they fled.

And the taper's light was extinguish'd quite,
And the choristers faintly sung,
And the priests dismay'd, panted and prayed
Till fear froze every tongue.

And in he came with eyes of flame,
The Devil, to fetch the dead,
And all the church with his presence glowed
Like a fiery furnace red.

He laid his hand on the iron chains,
And like flax they moulder'd asunder,
And the coffin lid that was barr'd so firm
He burst with his voice of thunder.

And he bade the old woman of Berkeley rise
And come with her master away,
And the cold sweat stood on the cold cold corpse.
At the voice she was forced to obey.

She rose on her feet in her winding-sheet,
Her dead flesh quivered with fear,
And a groan like that which the old woman gave
Never did mortal hear.

She followed the fiend to the church door,
There stood a black horse there,
His breath was red like furnace smoke,
His eyes like a meteor's glare.

The fiend he flung her on the horse,
And he leapt up before,
And away like the lightning's speed they went,
And she was seen no more.

They saw her no more, but her cries and shrieks
For four miles round they could hear,
And children at rest at their mother's breast,
Started and screamed with fear.

THE SURGEON'S WARNING.

The subject of this parody was given to me by a friend, to whom also I am indebted for some of the stanzas.

Respecting the patent coffins herein mentioned, after the manner of Catholic poets, who confess the actions they attribute to their Saints and Deity to be but fiction, I hereby declare that it is by no means my design to depreciate that useful invention; and all persons to whom this Ballad shall come, are requested to take notice, that nothing here asserted concerning the aforesaid coffins is true, except that the maker and patentee lives by St. Martin's Lane.

THE Doctor whispered to the nurse,
• And the Surgeon knew what he said;
And he grew pale at the Doctor's tale,
And trembled in his sick bed.

“ Now fetch me my brethren, and fetch them with
speed,”
The Surgeon affrighted said;
“ The Parson and the Undertaker,
Let them hasten, or I shall be dead.”

The Parson and the Undertaker
They hastily came complying,
And the Surgeon's apprentices ran up stairs
When they heard that their master was dying.

The Prentices all they entered the room;
By one, by two, by three;
With a sly grin came Joseph in,
First of the company.

The Surgeon swore as they enter'd his door,
—'Twas fearful his oaths to hear—
“Now send these scoundrels to the Devil,
For God's sake, my brethren dear.”

He foam'd at the mouth with the rage he felt,
And he wrinkled his black eye-brow;
“That rascal Joe would be at me I know,
But, zounds, let him spare me now.”

Then out they sent the Prentices,
The fit it left him weak,
He look'd at his brothers with ghastly eyes,
And faintly struggled to speak.

“All kinds of carcasses I have cut up,
And the judgment now must be!
But, brothers, I took care of you,
So pray take care of me!

“I have made candles of infants' fat,
The Sextons have been my slaves,
I have bottled babes unborn, and dried
Hearts and livers from rifled graves.

“And my Prentices will surely come,
And carve me bone from bone;
And I who have rifled the dead man's grave,
Shall never have rest in my own.

“Bury me in lead when I am dead,
My brethren, I entreat,
And see the coffin weigh'd, I beg,
Lest the Plumber should be a cheat.

“And let it be solder'd closely down,
Strong as strong can be, I implore;
And put it in a patent coffin,
That I may rise no more.

“ If they carry me off in the patent coffin,
Their labour will be in vain ;
Let the Undertaker see it bought of the maker,
Who lives in St. Martin's Lane.

“ And bury me in my brother's church,
For that will safer be ;
And I implore lock the church door,
And pray take care of the key.

“ And all night long let three stout men
The vestry watch within ;
To each man give a gallon of beer,
And a keg of Hollands gin ;

· Powder and ball and blunderbuss,
To save me if he can ;
And oke five guineas if he shoot
A resurrection man.

“ And let them watch me for three weeks,
My wretched corpse to save ;
For then I think that I may stink
Enough to rest in my grave.”

The Surgeon laid him down in his bed,
His eyes grew deadly dim ;
Short came his breath, and the struggle of death
Distorted every limb.

They put him in lead when he was dead,
And shrouded up so neat ;
And they the leaden coffin weigh,
Lest the Plumber should be a cheat.

They had it solder'd closely down,
And examined it o'er and o'er,
And they put it in a patent coffin,
That he might rise no more.

For to carry him off in a patent coffin,
Would, they thought, be but labour in vain ;
So the Undertaker saw it bought of the maker,
Who lives by St. Martin's Lane.

In his brother's church they buried him,
That safer he might be ;
They lock'd the door, and would not trust
The Sexton with the key.

And three men in the vestry watch,
To save him if they can ;
And should he come there, to shoot, they swear,
A resurrection man.

And the first night by lanthorn light,
Thro' the church-yard as they went,
A guinea of gold the Sexton showed
That Mister Joseph sent.

But conscience was tough, it was not enough,
And their honesty never swerved,
And they bade him go with Mister Joe
To the Devil, as he deserved.

So all night long by the vestry fire
They quaff'd their gin and ale ;
And they did drink, as you may think,
And told full many a tale.

The second night, by lanthorn light,
Thro' the church-yard as they went,
He whispered anew, and show'd them two
That Mister Joseph sent.

The guineas were bright, and attracted their sight.
They look'd so heavy and new,
And their fingers itch'd as they were bewitch'd,
And they knew not what to do.

But they wavered not long, for conscience was strong,
And they thought they might get more,
And they refused the gold, but not
So rudely as before.

So all night long by the vestry fire
They quaff'd their gin and ale ;
And they did drink, as you may think,
And told full many a tale.

The third night, as by lanthorn light
Thro' the church-yard they went,
He bade them see, and show'd them three
That Mister Joseph sent.

They look'd askance with greedy glance,
The guineas they shone bright,
For the Sexton on the yellow gold
Let fall his lanthorn light.

And he look'd sly with his roguish eye,
And gave a well-tim'd wink,
And they could not stand the sound in his hand,
For he made the guineas chink.

And conscience late, that had such weight,
All in a moment fails,
For well they knew that it was true,
A dead man told no tales.

And they gave all their powder and ball,
And took the gold so bright,
And they drank their beer and made good cheer,
Till now it was midnight.

Then, tho' the key of the church door
Was left with the Parson his brother,
It opened at the Sexton's touch—
Because he had another.

And in they go with that villain Joe,
To fetch the body by night,
And all the church look'd dismally
By his dark lanthorn light.

They laid the pick-axe to the stones,
And they moved them soon asunder ;
They shovell'd away the hard-prest clay,
And came to the coffin under.

They burst the patent coffin first,
And they cut thro' the lead,
And they laugh'd aloud when they saw the shroud,
Because they had got at the dead.

And they allowed the Sexton the shroud,
And they put the coffin back,
And nose and knees they then did squeeze
The Surgeon in a sack.

The watchmen as they past along,
Full four yards off, could smell,
And a curse bestowed upon the load
So disagreeable.

So they carried the sack a-pick-a-back,
And they carved him bone from bone ;
But what became of the Surgeon's soul,
Was never to mortal known.

KING HENRY V. AND THE HERMIT OF
DREUX.

While Henry V. lay at the siege of Dreux, an honest hermit, unknown to him, came and told him the great evils he brought on Christendom by his unjust ambition, who usurped the kingdom of France, against all manner of right, and contrary to the will of God; wherefore in His holy name he threatened him with a severe and sudden punishment, if he desisted not from his enterprise. Henry took this exhortation either as an idle whimsy, or a suggestion of the Dauphin, and was but the more confirmed in his design. But the blow soon followed the threatening; for within some few months after, he was smitten with a strange and incurable disease.—*Murray*.

He past unquestioned thro' the camp,
Their heads the soldiers bent
In silent reverence, or begged
A blessing as he went;
And so the Hermit past along
And reached the royal tent.

King Henry sate in his tent alone,
The map before him lay,
Fresh conquests he was planning there
To grace the future day.

King Henry lifted up his eyes
The intruder to behold:
With reverence he the Hermit saw,
For the holy man was old,
His look was gentle as a saint's
And yet his eye was bold.

“ Repent thee, Henry, of the wrongs
That thou hast done this land,
O King repent in time, for know
The judgment is at hand.

“ I have past forty years of peace
Beside the river Blaise,
But what a weight of woe hast thou
Laid on my latter days !

“ I used to see along the stream
The white sail sailing down,
That wafted food in better times
To yond^r peaceful town.

“ Henry ! I never now behold
The white sail sailing down ;
Famine, Disease, and Death, and thou
Destroy that wretched town.

“ I used to hear the traveller’s voice
As here he past along,
Or maiden as she loiter’d home
Singing her even-song.

“ No traveller’s voice may now be heard
In fear he hastens by ;
But I have heard the village maid
In vain for succour cry.

“ I used to see the youths row down
And watch the dripping ear,
As pleasantly their viols’ tones
Came softened to the shore.

“ King Henry many a blackened corpse
I now see floating down !
Thou bloody man ! repent in time
And leave this leaguer’d town.”

"I shall go on," King Henry cried,
"And conquer this good land,
Seest thou not, Hermit, that the Lord
Hath given it to my hand?"

The Hermit heard King Henry speak,
And angrily looked down;—
His face was gentle, and for that
More solemn was his frown.

What if no miracle from heaven
The murderer's arm control,
Think you for that the weight of blood
Lies lighter on his soul?

"Thou conqueror King repent in time,
Or dread the coming woe!
For Henry thou hast heard the threat
And soon shalt feel the blow!"

King Henry forced a careless smile,
As the Hermit went his way;
But Henry soon remembered him
Upon his dying day.

GOD'S JUDGMENT ON A BISHOP.

THE summer and autumn had been so wet,
That in winter the corn was growing yet,
'Twas a piteous sight to see all around
The corn lie rotting on the ground.

Every day, the starving poor
Crowded around Bishop Hatto's door,
For he had a plentiful last-year's store ;
And all the neighbourhood could tell
His granaries were furnished well.

At last, Bishop Hatto appointed a day
To quiet the poor without delay ;
He bade them to his great barn repair,
And they should have food for the winter there.

Rejoiced the tidings good to hear,
The poor folk flocked from far and near ;
The great barn was full as it could hold
Of women and children, and young and old.

Then when he saw it could hold no more,
Bishop Hatto he made fast the door,
And while for mercy on Christ they call,
He set fire to the barn, and burnt them all.

"I'faith, tis an-excellent bonfire !" quoth he,
"And the country is greatly obliged to me,
For ridding it, in these times forlorn,
Of rats ~~that~~ only consume the corn."

So then to his palace returned he,
And he sat down to supper merrily,
And he slept that night like an innocent man,
But Bishop Hatto never slept again.

In the morning, as he entered the hall
Where his picture hung against the wall,
A sweat, like death, all over him came,
For the rats had eaten it out of the frame.

As he look'd, there came a man from his farm,
He had a countenance white with alarm.
"My Lord, I opened your granaries this morn
And the rats had eaten all your corn."

Another came running presently,
And he was pale as pale could be ;
"Fly, my Lord Bishop, fly !" quoth he,
"Ten thousand rats are coming this way,—
The Lord forgive you for yesterday !"

"I'll go to my tower on the Rhine," replied he,
"Tis the safest place in Germany,—
The walls are high, and the shores are steep,
And the tide is strong, and the water deep."

Bishop Hatto fearfully hastened away,
And he crost the Rhine without delay,
And reach'd his tower in the island, and barr'd
All the gates secure and hard.

He laid him down, and closed his eyes ;—
But soon a scream made him arise,
He started, and saw two eyes of flame
On his pillow, from whence the screaming came.

He listen'd, and look'd.—it was only the cat ;
But the Bishop he grew more fearful for that,
For she sate screaming, mad with fear,
At the army of rats that were drawing near.

For they have swum over the river so deep,
 And they have climb'd the shores so steep,
 And now by thousands up they crawl
 To the holes and windows in the wall.

Down on his knees the Bishop fell,
 And faster and faster his beads did he tell.
 As louder and louder, drawing near,
 The saw of their teeth without he could hear.

And in at the windows, and in at the door,
 And through the walls by thousands they pour,
 And down from the ceiling, and up thro' the floor,
 From the right and the left, from behind and before,
 From within and without, from above and below,
 And all at once to the Bishop they go.

They have whett'd their teeth against the stones,
 And now they pick the Bishop's bones,
 They gnawed the flesh from every limb,
 For they were sent to do judgment on him !

THE PIOUS PAINTER.

The story of the Pious Painter is related in the "Pia-tilaria" of Gazæus, but the Catholic poet has omitted the conclusion. This is to be found in the "Fabliaux" of Le Grand.

THE FIRST PART.

THERE once was a painter, in Catholic days,
 Like Job, who eschewed all evil.
 Still on his Madonnas the curious may gaze
 With applause and with pleasure, but chiefly his
 • praise
 And delight was in painting the devil.

They were angels, compared to the devils he drew
Who besieged poor St. Anthony's cell ;
Such burning hot eyes, such a damnable hue !
You could even smell Limstone, their breath was so
blue,

He painted the devil so well.

And now had the Artist a picture begun,
'Twas over the Virgin's church door ;
She stood on the dragon embracing her Son,
Many devils already the Artist had done,
But this must outdo all before

The old dragon's imps, as they fled thro' the air,
At seeing it, paus'd on the wing,
For he had the likeness so just to a hair,
That they came, as Apollyon himself had been there
To pay their respects to their king.

Every child at beholding it, shivered with dread,
And scream'd as he turn'd away quick.
Not an old woman saw it, but raising her head,
Dropt a bead, made a cross on her wrinkles and said,
"Lord! keep me from ugly Old Nick!"

What the Painter so earnestly thought on by day,
He sometimes would dream of by night ;
But once he was startled, as sleeping he lay ;
'Twas no fancy, no dream, he could plainly survey
That the devil himself was in sight.

"You rascally dauber!" old Beelzebub cries,
"Take heed how you wrong me again!
Tho' your caricatures for myself I despise,
Make me handsomer now in the multitude's eyes,
Or see if I threaten in vain!"

Now the painter was bold, and religious beside,
And on faith he had certain reliance.
So earnestly he all his countenance eyed,

And thank'd him for sitting, with Catholic pride, (
And sturdily bade him defiance.

Betimes in the morning, the Painter arose,
He's ready as soon as 'tis light.
Every look, every line, every feature he knows,
'Tis fresh in his eye, to his labour he goes,
And he has the old wicked one quite.

Happy man! he is sure the resemblance can't fail,--
The tip of his nose is red hot,
There's his grin, and his fangs, his skin cover'd with
scale,
And that the identical curl of his tail,—
Not a mark, not a claw is forgot.

He looks, and retouches again with delight ;
'Tis a portrait complete to his mind !
He touches again, and again gluts his sight.
He looks round for applause, and he sees with affright,
The original standing behind.

" Fool ! Idiot !" old Beelzebub grinn'd as he spoke,
And stamp'd on the scaffold in ire.
The Painter grew pale, for he knew it no joke,
'Twas a terrible height, and the scaffolding broke,
— The devil could wish it no higher.

" Help ! help me, O Mary !" he cried, in alarm,
As the scaffold sunk under his feet.
From the canvas, the Virgin extended her arm,
She caught the good Painter, she saved him from harm,
There were hundreds who saw in the street.

The old dragon fled, when the wonder he spied,
And cursed his own fruitless endeavour.
While the Painter called after, his rage to deride,
Shook his pallet and brushes in triumph, and cried,
" I'll paint thee more ugly than ever !"

THE SECOND PART.

The Painter so pious, all praise had acquired
For defying the malice of hell ;
The monks the unerring resemblance admired ;
Not a lady lived near, but her portrait desired
From one who succeeded so well.

One there was to be painted the number among,
Of features most fair to behold ;
The country around of fair Marguerite rung,—
Marguerite she was lovely, and lively, and young,
Her husband was ugly and old.

O, Painter, avoid her ! O, Painter take care !
For Satan is watchful for you ;
Take heed lest you fall in the wicked one's snare,
The net is made ready : O, Painter, beware
Of Satan and Marguerite too.

She seats herself now, now she lifts up her head,
On the Artist she fixes her eyes ;
The colours are ready, the canvas is spread,
He lays on the white, and he lays on the red,
And the features of beauty arise.

He is come to her eyes, eyes so bright and so blue !
There's a look that he cannot express ;—
His colours are dull to their quick-sparkling hue,
More and more on the lady he fixes his view,
On the canvas he looks less and less.

In vain he retouches, her eyes sparkle more,
And that look that fair Marguerite gave !
Many devils the Artist had painted of yore,
But he never attempted an angel before,—
St. Anthony help him, and save !

He yielded, alas ! for the truth must be told,
To the woman, the tempter, and Fate.
It was settled, the lady so fair to behold,
Should elope from her husband so ugly and old,
With the Painter so pious of late !

Now Satan exults in his vengeance complete,
To the husband he makes the scheme known :
Night comes, and the lovers impatiently meet,
Together they fly, they are seiz'd in the street,
And in prison the Painter is thrown.

With Repentance, his only companion, he lies,
And a dismal companion is she !
On a sudden, he saw the old serpent arise,
“ Now, you villanous dauber !” Sir Beelzebub cries,
“ You are paid for your insults to me !

“ But my tender heart it is easy to move,
If, to what I propose, you agree ;
That picture—be just—the resemblance improve,
Make a handsomer portrait, your chains I'll remove,
And you shall this instant be free.”

Overjoyed, the conditions so easy he hears,
“ I'll make you quite handsome !” he said,—
He said, and his chain on the devil appears ;
Releas'd from his prison, releas'd from his fears,
The Painter is snug in his bed.

At morn he arises, composes his look,
And proceeds to his work as before :
The people beheld him, the culprit they took ;
They thought that the Painter his prison had broke.
And to prison they led him once more.

They open the dungeon—behold ! in his place,
In the corner, old Beelzebub lay.
He smirks, and he smiles, and he leers, with a grace,

That the Painter might catch all the charms of his
face ;

Then vanish'd in lightning away.

Quoth the Painter, " I trust you'll suspect me no more

Since you find my assertions were true.

But I'll alter the picture above the church-door,

For I never saw Satan so closely before,

And I must give the devil his due."

ST. MICHAEL'S CHAIR,

AND WHO SAT THERE.

MERRILY, merrily rung the bells,

The bells of St. Michael's tower,

When Richard Penlake, and Rebecca, his wife,

Arrived at the church door.

Richard Penlake was a cheerful man,

Cheerful, and frank, and free,

But he led a sad life with Rebecca, his wife,

For a terrible shrew was she.

Richard Penlake a scolding would take,

Till patience availed no longer,

Then Richard Penlake his crab-stick would take,

And show her that he was the stronger.

Rebecca, his wife, had often wish'd

To sit in St. Michael's chair ;

For she should be the mistress then

If she had once sat there.

It chanced that Richard Penlake fell sick,
They thought he would have died ;
Rebecca, his wife, made a vow for his life,
As she knelt by his bedside.

" Now hear my prayer, St. Michael, and spare
My husband's life," quoth she ;
" And to thine altar we will go,
Six marks to give to thee."

Richard Penlake repeated the vow,
For woundily sick was he ;
" Save me, St. Michael, and we will go,
Six marks to give to thee."

When Richard grew well, Rebecca, his wife,
Teazed him by night and by day :
" O, mine own dear ! for you I fear,
If we the vow delay."

Merrily, merrily rung the bells,
The bells of St. Michael's tower,
When Richard Penlake, and Rebecca, his wife,
Arrived at the church door.

Six marks they on the altar laid,
And Richard knelt in prayer ;
She left him to pray, and stole away,
To sit in St. Michael's chair.

Up the tower Rebecca ran,
Round, and round, and round ;
'Twas a giddy sight to stand a-top,
And look upon the ground.

" A curse on the ringers for rocking
The tower !" Rebecca cried,
As over the church battlements
She strode with a long stride.

"A blessing on St. Michael's chair!"

She said, as she sat down.

Merrily, merrily rung the bells,
And out Rebecca was thrown.

Tidings to Richard Penlake were brought,
That his good wife was dead :

"Now shall we toll for her poor soul
The great church-bell?" they said.

"Toll at her burying," quoth Richard Penlake ;

"Toll at her burying," quoth he ;

"But don't disturb the ringers now,
In compliment to me."

A BALLAD,

OF A YOUNG MAN THAT WOULD READ UNLAWFUL BOOKS,
AND HOW HE WAS PUNISHED.

VERY PITHY AND PROFITABLE.

CORNELIUS AGRIPPA went out one day,
His study he lock'd ere he went away,
And he gave the key of the door to his wife,
And charg'd her to keep it lock'd, on her life.

And if any one ask my study to see,
I charge you trust them not with the key ;
Whoever may beg, and intreat, and implore,
On your life let nobody enter that door."

There liv'd a young man in the house, who in vain
Access to that study had sought in obtain ;

And he begg'd and pray'd the books to see,^f
Till the foolish woman gave him the key.

On the study table a book there lay,
Which Agrippa himself had been reading that day :
The letters were written with blood within,
And the leaves were made of dead men's skin.

And these horrible leaves of magic between
Were the ugliest pictures that ever were seen --
The likeness of things so foul to behold,
That what they were is not fit to be told.

The young man, he began to read,
He knew not what, but he would proceed ;
When there was heard a sound at the door,
Which, as he read on, grew more and more.

And more and more the knocking grew—
The young man knew not what to do ;
But trembling in fear he sat within,
Till the door was broke, and the devil came in.

Two hideous horns on his head he had got,
Like iron heated nine times red hot ;
The breath of his nostrils was brimstone blue,
And his tail like a fiery serpent grew.

"What wouldst thou with me?" the Wicked One cried,
But not a word the young man replied :
Every hair on his head was standing upright,
And his limbs like a palsy shook with affright.

"What wouldst thou with me?" cried the Author of ill,
But the wretched young man was silent still ;
Not a word had his lips the power to say,
And his marrow seem'd to be melting away.

"What wouldst thou with me?" the third time he cries,
And a flash of lightning came from his eyes,
And he lifted his griffin claw in the air,
And the young man had not strength for a prayer.

His eyes red fire and fury dart,
As out he tore the young man's heart ;
He grinn'd a horrible grin at his prey,
And in a clap of thunder vanish'd away.

THE MORAL.

Henceforth let all young men take heed
How in a conjuror's book they read.

KING CHARLEMAGNE.

It was strange that he loved her, for youth was gone
by,
And the bloom of her beauty was fled ;
'Twas the glance of the harlot that gleam'd in her eye,
And all but the Monarch could plainly descry
From whence came her white and her red.

Yet he thought with Agatha none might compare—
That kings might be proud of her chain ;
The court was a desert if she were not there—
She only was lovely, she only was fair :
Such dotage possess'd Charlemagne.

The soldier, the statesman, the courtier, the maid,—
Alike do their rival detest ;
And the good old archbishop, who ceased to upbraid,
Shook his gray head in sorrow, and silently pray'd
To sing her the requiem of rest.

A joy ill dissembled soon gladdens them all,
For Agatha sickens and dies ;
And now they are ready with bier and with pall,
The tapers gleam gloomy amid the high hall,
And the bell tolls long thro' the skies.

They came, but he sent them in anger away,
For she should not be buried he said ;
And despite of all counsel, for many a day,
Array'd in her costly apparel she lay,
And he would go sit by the dead.

The cares of the kingdom demand him in vain,
And the army cry out for their lord ;
The Lombards, the fierce misbelievers of Spain,
Now ravage the realms of the proud Charlemagne,
And still he unsheaths not the sword.

The soldiers they clamour, the monks bend in prayer
In the quiet retreats of the cell ;
The physicians to counsel together repair—
They pause and they ponder—at last they declare—
That his senses are bound by a spell.

With relics protected, and confident grown,
And telling devoutly his beads,
The archbishop prepares him, and when it was known,
That the King for awhile left the body alone,
To search for the spell he proceeds.

Now careful he searches with tremulous haste
For the spell that bewitches the King ;
And under the tongue for security placed,
Its margin with mystical characters faced,
At length he discovers a ring.

Rejoicing, he seized it, and hasten'd away—
The Monarch re-entered the room—
The enchantment was ended, and suddenly gay,

He bade the attendants no longer delay,
But bear her with speed to the tomb.

Now merriment, joyaunce, and feasting again
Enlivened the palace of Aix ;
And now, by his heralds, did King Charlemagne
Invite to his palace the courtier train,
To hold a high festival day.

And anxiously now for the festival day
The highly-born maidens prepare ;
And now all apparell'd in costly array,
Exulting they come to the palace of Aix,
Young and aged, the brave and the fair.

Oh ! happy the damsel, who, 'mid her compeers,
For a moment engaged the King's eye !
Now glowing with hopes, and now fever'd with fears,
Each maid or triumphant or jealous appears,
As noticed by him, or pass'd by.

And now, as the evening approach'd, to the ball
In anxious suspense they advance ;
Each hoped the King's choice on her beauties might
fall—

When lo ! to the utter confusion of all,
He asked the Archbishop to dance.

The damsels they laugh, and the barons they stare.—
'Twas mirth and astonishment all ;
And the Archbishop started, and muttered a prayer,
And, wroth at receiving such mockery there,
Withdrew him in haste from the hall.

The moon dimpled over the water with light,
As he wandered along the lake side ;
When lo ! where beside him the King met his sight—
“ O turn thee, Archbishop, my joy and delight !
Oh turn thee, my charmer ! ” he cried.

“ Oh come where the feast and the dance and the song
 Invite thee to mirth and to love ;
Or, at this happy moment, away from the throng,
To the shade of yon wood let us hasten along—
 The moon never pierces that grove.”

Amazement and anger the prelate possess,
 With terror his accents he heard ;
Then Charlemagne warmly and eagerly prest
The Archbishop's old wither'd hand to his breast,
 And kiss'd his old gray grizzle beard.

“ Let us well, then, these fortunate moments employ !”
 Cried the Monarch, with passionate tone :
“ Come away, then, dear charmer ! my angel ! my joy !
Nay, struggle not now—'tis in vain to be coy—
 And remember that we are alone.”

“ Blessed Mary protect me !” the Archbishop cried :
 “ What madness is come to the King ?”
In vain to escape from the Monarch he tried .
When luckily he on his finger espied
 The glitter of Agatha's ring.

Overjoy'd, the old prelate remembered the spell,
 And far in the lake flung the ring ;
The waters closed round it, and, wond'rous to tell,
Releas'd from the curs'd enchantment of hell,
 His reason returned, to the King.

But he built him a palace there close by the bay,
 And there he did 'stablish his reign ;
And the traveller who will, may behold at this day,
A monument still in the ruins of Aix
 Of the spell that possess'd Charlemagne.

ST. ROMAULD.

* The virtues of this Saint, as mentioned in the poem, may be found particularized in his life. The honour intended him by the Spaniards is mentioned by Andrews, "History of England," vol. i.

ONE day, it matters not to know
How many hundred years ago,
A Spaniard stopt at a pesado door :
The landlord came to welcome him, and chat
Of this and that,
For he had seen the traveller there before.

"Does holy Romauld dwell
Still in his cell ?
The traveller ask'd ; "or is the old man dead ?"
"He has left his loving flock ; and we
So good a Christian never more shall see ;"
The landlord answer'd, and he shook his head.

"Ah, Sir ! we knew his worth—
If ever there did live a saint on earth !
Why, Sir, he always used to wear a shirt
For thirty days, all seasons, day and night :
Good man ! he knew it was not right
For dust and ashes to fall out with dirt ;
And then he only hung it out in the rain,
And put it on again.

"There used to be rare work
With him, and the devil there in yonder cell ;
For satan used to maul him like a Turk.
There they would, sometimes fight
All through a winter's night,
From sunset until morn—
He with a cross, the devil with his horn :

The devil spitting fire with might and main;
Enough to make St. Michael half afraid ;

He splashing holy water, till he made

His red hide hiss again,

And the hot vapour fill'd the little cell.

This was so common, that his face became

All black and yellow with the brimstone flame ;

And then he smelt—Oh Lord ! how he did smell !

“ Then, Sir, to see how he would mortify

The flesh ! If any one had dainty fare,

Good man ! he would come there,

And look at all the delicate things, and cry,

‘ O belly, belly !

You would be gormandizing now, I know—

But it shall not be so ;

Home to your bread and water ! home, I tell ye ! ”

“ But,” quoth the traveller, “ wherefore did he leave

A flock that knew his saintly worth so well ? ”

“ Why,” said the landlord, “ Sir, it so befell,

He heard unluckily of our intent

To do him a great honour ; and you know,

He was not covetous of fame below,

And so by stealth one night away he went.”

“ What might this honour be ? ” the traveller cried ;

“ Why, Sir,” the host replied ;

“ We thought perhaps that he might one day leave us ;

And then should strangers have

The good man’s grave—

A loss that like would naturally grieve us,

For he’ll be made a saint of to be sure—

Therefore we thought it prudent to secure

His relics while we might ;

And so we meant to strangle him one night.”

THE WELL OF ST. KEYNE.

“I know not whether it be worth’ the reporting, that there is in Cornwall, near the parish of St. Neots, a well arched over with the robes of four kinds of trees—withy, oak, elm, and ash—dedicated to St. Keyne. The reported virtue of the water is this—that whether husband or wife come first to drink thereof, they get the mastery thereby.”—*Fuller*.

A WELL there is in the west country,
And a clearer one never was seen ;
There is not a wife in the west country
But has heard of the Well of St. Keyne.

An oak and an elm tree stand beside,
And behind does an ash tree grow,
And a willow from the bank above
Droops to the water below.

A traveller came to the Well of St. Keyne ;
Joyfully he drew nigh,
For from cock-crow he had been travelling,
And there was not a cloud in the sky.

He drank of the water so cool and clear,
For thirsty and hot was he ;
And he sat down upon the bank,
Under the willow tree.

There came a man from the neighbouring town
At the well to fill his pail ;
On the well-side he rested it,
And he bade the stranger hail.

“Now, art thou a bachelor, stranger?” quoth he ;
“For an if thou hast a wife,
The happiest draught thou hast drank this day.
That ever thou didst in thy life.

"Or has thy good woman, if one thou hast, . .
Ever here in Cornwall been ?

For an if she have, I'll venture my life,
She has drank of the Well of St. Keyne."

"I have left a good woman, who never was here,"
The stranger he made reply ;

"But that my draught should be better for that,
I pray you, answer me why."

"St. Keyne," quoth the countryman, "many a time
Drank of this crystal well ;
And before the angel summoned her,
She laid on the water a spell.

"If the husband, of this gifted well,
Shall drink before his wife,
A happy man thenceforth is he,
For he shall be master for life.

"But if the wife should drink of it first—
God help the husband then !"
The stranger stoopt to the Well of St. Keyne,
And drank of the water again.

"You drank of the well, I warrant, betimes ?"
He to the countryman said :
But the countryman smil'd as the stranger spake,
And sheepishly shook his head.

"I hasten'd as soon as the wedding was done,
And left my wife in the porch ;
But i'faith she had been wiser than me,
For she took a bottle to church."

BISHOP BRUNO.

"Bruno, the Bishop of Herbipolitanum, sailing in the river of Danubius, with Henry the Third, then Emperour, being not far from a place which the Germanes call Ben Strudel, or the devouring gulfe, which is neere unto Grinon, a castle in Austria, a spirit was heard clamouring aloud, 'Ho, ho, Bishop Bruno! whether art thou travelling? but dispose of thyselfe how thou pleasest, thou shalt be my prey and spoile.' At the hearing of these words they were all stupified, and the Bishop with the rest crosst and blest themselves. The issue was, that within a short time after, the Bishop, feasting with the Emperour in a castle belonging to the Countesse of Esburch, a rafter fell from the roof of the chamber wherein they sate, and strooke him dead at the table."—Heywood's "*Hierarchie of the Blessed Angels*."

BISHOP BRUNO awoke in the dead midnight,
And he heard his heart beat loud with affright :
He dreamt he had rung the palace bell,
And the sound it gave was his passing knell.

Bishop Bruno smiled at his fears so vain,
He turned to sleep, and he dreamt again :
He rang at the palace gate once more,
And Death was the porter that opened the door.

He started up at the fearful dream,
And he heard at his window the screech-owl scream !
Bishop Bruno slept no more that night—
Oh, glad was he when he saw the daylight !

Now he goes forth in proud array,
For he with the Emperor dines to-day ;
There was not a baron in Germany
That went with a nobler train than he.

Before and behind his soldiers ride—
The people throng'd to see their pride ;
They bow'd the head, and the knee they bent,
But nobody blest him as he went.

So he went on stately and proud,
When he heard a voice, that cried aloud,
“ Ho, ho ! Bishop Bruno, you travel with glee !
But I would have you know, you travel to me ! ”

Behind and before, and on either side,
He look'd, but nobody he espied ;
And the Bishop at that grew cold with fear,
For he heard the words distinct and clear.

And when he rung at the palace bell,
He almost expected to hear his knell ;
And when the porter turn'd the key,
He almost expected Death to see.

But soon the Bishop recover'd his glee,
For the Emperor welcomed him royally ;
And now the tables were spread, and there
Were choicest wines and dainty fare.

And now the Bishop had blest the meat,
When a voice was heard as he sat in his seat—
“ With the Emperor now you are dining in glee,
But know, Bishop Bruno, you sup with me ! ”

The Bishop then grew pale with affright,
And suddenly lost his appetite ;
All the wine and dainty cheer
Could not comfort his heart, so sick with fear.

But by little and little recovered he,
For the wine went flowing merrily ;
And he forgot his former dread,
And his cheeks again grew rosy red.

When he sat down to the royal fare,
Bishop Bruno was the saddest man there ;
But when the masquers entered the hall,
He was the merriest man of all.

Then from amid the masquers' crowd,
There went a voice hollow and loud—
" You have past the day, Bishop Bruno, with glee !
But you must pass the night with me !"

His cheeks grow pale and his eye-balls glare,
And stiff round his tonsure bristles his hair ;
With that there came one from the masquers' band,
And took the Bishop by the hand.

The bony hand suspended his breath,
His marrow grew cold at the touch of death ;
On saints in vain he attempted to call—
Bishop Bruno fell dead in the palace hall.

THE BATTLE OF BLENHEIM.

It was a summer evening—
Old Kaspar's work was done ;
And he before his cottage door
Was sitting in the sun,
And by him sported on the green
His little grandchild, Wilhelmine.

She saw her brother Peterkin
Roll something large and round,
Which he beside the rivulet,
In playing there, had found :
He came to ask what he had found,
That was so large, and smooth, and round.

Old Kaspar took it from the boy,
Who stood expectant by ;
And then the old man shook his head,
And with a natural sigh—
“ ’Tis some poor fellow’s skull,” said he,
“ Who fell in the great victory.

“ I find them in the garden, for
There’s many here about ;
And often when I go to plough,
The ploughshare turns them out :
For many thousand men,” said he,
“ Were slain in the great victory.”

“ Now, tell us what ’twas all about,”
Young Peterkin he cries ;
And little Wilhelmine looks up
With wonder-waiting eyes—
“ Now tell us all about the war,
And what they killed each other for.”

“ It was the English,” Kaspar cried,
“ Who put the French to rout ;
But what they kill’d each other for,
I could not well make out.
But everybody said,” quoth he,
“ That ’twas a famous victory.

“ My father lived at Blenheim then,
Yon little stream hard by ;
They burnt his dwelling to the ground,
And he was forced to fly :
So with his wife and child he fled,
Nor had he where to rest his head.

“ With fire and sword the country round
Was wasted far and wide ;

, 'And many a childing mother then
And new-born infant died.
But things like that, you know, must be
At every famous victory.

"They say it was a shocking sight,
After the field was won ;
For many thousand bodies here
Lay rotting in the sun :
But things like that, you know, must be
After a famous victory.

"Great praise the Duke of Marlbro' won,
And our good Prince Eugene."

"Why, 'twas a very wicked thing!"
Said little Wilhelmine.

"Nay, nay, my little girl!" quoth he,
"It was a famous victory.

"And everybody praised the Duke,
Who such a fight did win :"

"But what good came of it at last?"
Quoth little Peterkin.

"Why that I cannot tell," said he,
"But 'twas a famous victory."

ST. GUALBERTO.

ADDRESSED TO A FRIEND.

THE work is done, the fabric is complete ;
Distinct the traveller sees its distant tower,
Yet ere his steps attain the sacred seat,
Must toil for many a league and many an hour.
Elate, the Abbot sees the pile, and knows,
Stateliest of convents now, his new Moscera rose.

Long were the tale that told Moscera's pride,
Its columns' clustered strength and lofty state ;
How many a saint bedeck'd its sculptured side,
What intersecting arches graced its gate ;
Its tower how high, its massy walls how strong, —
These fairly to describe were sure a tedious song.

Yet, while the fane rose slowly from the ground,
But little store of charity, I ween,
The passing pilgrim at Moscera found ;
And 'often there the mendicant was seen
Hopeless to turn him from the convent door,
For this so costly work still kept the brethren poor.

Now all is perfect ; and, from every side,
They flock to view the fabric, young and old.
Who now can tell Rodulfo's secret pride,
When, on the sabbath-day, his eyes behold
The multitudes that crowd his chapel floor,
Some, sure to serve their God ; to see Moscera, more.

So chanced it that Gualberto pass'd that way,
Since sainted for a life of holy deeds ;
He paus'd, the new-rear'd convent to survey,

And, whilst o'er all its bulk his eye proceeds,
Sorrrows, as one whose holier feelings deem
That ill so proud a pile did humble monks beseeem.

Him, musing as he stood, Rodulfo saw,
And forth he came to greet the holy guest ;
For he was known as one who held the law
Of Benedict, and each severe behest
So duly kept, with such religious care,
That Heaven had oft vouchsafed its wonders to his
prayer.

“ Good brother, welcome ! ” thus Rodulfo cries,
“ In sooth, it glads me to behold you here.
It is Gualberto ! and mine aged eyes
Did not deceive me ; yet full many a year
Hath slipt away, since last you bade farewell
To me, your host, and my uncomfortable cell.

“ ’Twas but a sorry welcome then you found,
And such as suited ill a guest so dear ;
The pile was ruinous old, the base unsound.
It glads me more to bid you welcome here,
For you can call to mind our former state ;—
Come, brother, pass with me the new Moscera’s gate.”

So spake the cheerful Abbot ; but no smile
Of answering joy soften’d Gualberto’s brow ;
He raised his hand, and pointed to the pile,
“ Moscera better pleas’d me then, than now ;
A palace this, befitting kingly pride ;
Will holiness, my friend, in palace pomp abide ? ”

“ Ay,” cries Rodulfo, “ ’tis a goodly place !
And pomp becomes the house of worship well.
Nay, scowl not round with so severe a face !
When earthly kings in seats of grandeur dwell,
Where art, exhausted, decks the sumptuous hall,
Can poor and sordid huts beseeem the Lord of all ? ”

"And ye have rear'd these stately towers on high
To serve your God?" the monk severe replied.

"It rose from zeal and earnest piety,

And prompted by no worldly thoughts beside?
Abbot, to him who prays with soul sincere
In humble hermit cell, God will incline His ear.

"Rodulfo, while this haughty building rose,
Still was the pilgrim welcome at your door?
Did charity relieve the orphan's woes?

Clothed ye the naked—did ye feed the poor?
He who with alms most succours the distress,
Proud Abbot, know he serves his heavenly Father best.

"Did they in sumptuous palaces go dwell,
Who first abandoned all to serve the Lord?

Their place of worship was the desert cell,
Wild fruits and berries spread their frugal board,
And if a brook, like this, ran murmuring by,
They blest their gracious God, and thought it luxury."

Then anger darkened in Rodulfo's face,

"Enough of preaching," sharply he replied,
"Thou art grown envious—'tis a common case,
Humility is made the cloak of pride.

Proud of our home's magnificence are we,
But thou art far more proud in rags and beggary."

With that, Gualberto cried, in fervent tone,

"O Father, hear me! if this splendid pile
Was for Thine honour rear'd, and Thine alone;
Bless it, O Father, with Thy fostering smile!
Still may it stand, and never evil know,
Long as beside its walls the eternal stream shall flow.

"But, Lord, if vain and worldly-minded men
Have wasted here the wealth which Thou hast lent,
To pamper worldly pride; frown on it then!
Soon be Thy vengeance manifestly sent;

Let yonder brook, that flows so calm beside,
Now from its base sweep down the unholy house of
pride !”

He said ; and lo ! the brook no longer flows !
The waters pause, and now they swell on high,
High, and more high, the mass of water grows,—
The affrighted brethren from Moscera fly,
And on their saints, and on their God they call,
For now the mountain bulk o’ertops the convent wall.

It falls, the mountain bulk, with thunder sound !
Full on Moscera’s pile, the vengeance falls ;
Its lofty tower now rushes to the ground, ~
Prone lie its columns now, its high-arched walls,
Earth shakes beneath the onward-rolling tide,
That from its base swept down the unholy house of
pride.

Were old Gualberto’s reasons built on truth,
Dear George, or, like Moscera’s base, unsound ?
This sure I know, that glad am I, in sooth,
He only play’d his pranks on foreign ground ;
For had he turn’d the stream on England too,
The Vandal monk had spoilt full many a goodly view.

Then Malmesbury’s arch had never met my sight,
Nor Battle’s vast and venerable pile ;
I had not traversed then with such delight
The hallowed ruins of our Alfred’s isle,—
Where many a pilgrim’s curse is well bestow’d
On those who rob its walls to mend the turnpike-road.

Wells would have fallen, dear George, our country’s
pride ;

And Canning’s stately church been reared in vain.
Nor had the traveller Ely’s tower descried,
Which when thou seest far o’er the fenny plain,

Dear George, I counsel thee to turn that way,
Its ancient beauties sure will well reward delay.

And we should never then have heard, I think,
At evening hour, great Tom's tremendous knell ;
The fountain streams, that now in Christ-church
stink,

Had Niagara'd o'er the quadrangle ;
But, as 'twas beauty that deserv'd the flood,
I ween, dear George, our own old college might have
stood.

Then had not Westminster, the house of God,
Serv'd for a concert-room, or signal-post ;
Old Thames, obedient to the father's nod,
Had swept down Greenwich, England's noblest
boast ;
And eager to destroy the unholy walls,
Fleet-ditch had roll'd up hill to overwhelm St. Paul's.

George, dost thou deem the legendary deeds
Of Romish saints a useless medley store
Of lies, that he flings time away who reads ?
And wouldst thou rather bid me puzzle o'er
Matter and mind, and all the eternal round,
Plunged headlong down the dark and fathomless pro-
found ?

Now do I bless the man who undertook
These monks and martyrs to biographize,
And love to ponder o'er his ponderous book,
The mingle-mangle mass of truth and lies,
Where angels now, now Beelzebubs appear,
And blind and honest zeal, and holy faith sincere.

All is not very truth, and yet 'twere hard
The fabling monks for fabling to abuse ;
What if a monk, from better theme debarred,

Some pious subject for a tale should choose,
 How some good man the flesh and fiend o'ercame,
 His taste methinks, and not his conscience, were to
 blame.

In after years, what he, good man ! had wrote,
 As we write novels to instruct our youth,
 Went travelling on, its origin forgot,
 Till, at the length, it past for gospel-truth.
 A fair account ! and, shouldst thou like the plea,
 Thank thou, thy valued friend, dear George, who
 taught it me.

All is not false that seems at first a lie.
 One Antolinez, once, a Spanish knight,
 Knelt at the mass, when lo ! the troops hard by,
 Before the expected hour, began the fight ;
 Tho' courage, duty, honour, summoned there,
 He chose to forfeit all, not leave the unfinish'd prayer.

But whilst devoutly thus the unarmed knight
 Waits till the holy service should be o'er,
 Even then the foremost in the furious fight,
 Was he beheld to bathe his sword in gore ;
 First in the van, his plumes were seen to play,
 And Spain to him decreed the glory of the day.

The truth is told, and all at once exclaim,
 His guardian angel Heaven had deigned to send ;
 And thus the tale is handed down to fame.
 Now, if this Antolinez had a friend
 Who in the hour of danger serv'd him well,
 Dear George, the tale is true, and yet no miracle.

I am not one who scan with scornful eyes
 The dreams which make the enthusiast's best
 delight ;
 Nor thou the legendary lore despise,
 If of Gualberto yet again I write,—

How first impell'd, he sought the convent cell ;
It is a simple tale, and one that pleas'd me well.

Fortune had smiled upon Gualberto's birth,
The heir of Valdespesa's rich domain.
An only child, he grew in years and worth,
And well repaid a father's anxious pain.
Oft had his sire in battle forc'd success,
Well for his valour known, and known for haughtiness.

It chanc'd that one in kindred near allied,
Was slain by his hereditary foe ,
Much by his sorrow mov'd, and more by pride,
The father vow'd that blood for blood should flow ;
And, from his youth, Gualberto had been taught,
That with unceasing hate should just revenge be
sought.

Long did they wait ; at length the tidings came,
That through a lone and unfrequented way,
Soon would Anselmo—such the murderer's name—
Pass on his journey home, an easy prey.
“Go,” cried the father, “meet him in the wood !”
And young Gualberto went, and laid in wait for blood.

When now the youth was at the forest shade
Arriv'd it drew towards the close of day ;
Anselmo haply might be long delay'd,
And he, already wearied with his way,
Beneath an ancient oak his limbs reclined,
And thoughts of near revenge alone possess'd his mind.

Slow sunk the glorious sun, a roscate light
Spread o'er the forest from his lingering rays ;
The glowing clouds upon Gualberto's sight
Soften'd in shade—he could not choose but gaze ;
And now a placid grayness clad the heaven,
Save where the west retain'd the last green light of
ev'n.

Cool breath'd the grateful air, and fresher now
 'The fragrance of the autumnal leaves arose,
 The passing gale scarce moved the o'erhanging
 bough,
 And not a sound disturb'd the deep repose,
 Save when a falling leaf came fluttering by;
 Save the near brooklet's stream that murmur'd quietly.

Is there who has not felt the deep delight,
 The hush of soul, that scenes like these impart?
 The heart they will not soften, is not right.
 And young Gualberto was not hard of heart.
 Yet, sure he thinks revenge becomes him well,
 When from a neighbouring church he heard the vesper
 bell.

The Catholic who hears that vesper bell,
 Howe'er employed, must send a prayer to heaven.
 In foreign lands, I liked the custom well,
 For with the calm and sober thoughts of even
 It well accords; and wert thou journeying there,
 It would not hurt thee, George, to join that vesper-
 prayer.

Gualberto had been duly taught to hold
 Each pious rite with most religious care,
 And—for the young man's feelings were not cold—
 He never yet had mist his vesper-prayer.
 But strange misgivings now his heart invade,
 And when the vesper-bell had ceas'd, he had not
 pray'd.

And wherefore was it that he had not pray'd?
 The sudden doubt arose within his mind,
 And many a former precept then he weigh'd,
 The words of Him who died to save mankind,—
 How 'twas the meek who should inherit heaven,
 And man should man forgive, if he would be forgiven.

Troubled at heart, almost he felt a hope .
That yet some chance his victim might delay.
So as he mus'd, adown the neighbouring slope
He saw a lonely traveller on his way ;
And now he knows the man so much abhorr'd,—
His holier thoughts are gone, he bares the murderous
sword.

“ The house of Valdespesa gives the blow !
Go, and our vengeance to our kinsman tell ! ”
Despair and terror seized the unarm'd foe,
And prostrate at the young man's knees he fell,
And stopt his hand, and cried, “ Oh, do not take
A wretched sinner's life ! mercy, for Jesus' sake ! ”

At that most blessed name, as at a spell,
Conscience, the God within him, smote his heart.
His hand, for murder rais'd, unharmed fell,
He felt cold sweat-drops on his forehead start,
A moment mute in holy horror stood,
Then cried, “ Joy, joy, my God ! I have not shed his
blood ! ”

He rais'd Anselmo up, and bade him live,
And bless, for both preserv'd, that holy name ;
And pray'd the astonish'd foeman to forgive
The bloody purpose led by which he came.
Then to the neighbouring church he sped away,
His overburden'd soul before his God to lay.

He ran with breathless speed,—he reached the door,
With rapid throbs his feverish pulses swell,—
He came to crave for pardon, to adore
For grace vouchsafed ; before the cross he fell,
And rais'd his swimming eyes, and thought that

He saw the imaged Christ smile favouring on his
prayer.

A blest illusion ! from that-very night,
 'The monk's austerest life devout he led ;
And still he felt the enthusiast's deep delight,
 And seraph visions floated round his head ;
 The joys of heaven foretasted fill'd his soul,
And still the good man's name adorns the sainted roll.

MONODRAMAS.

SAPPHO.

Scene.—The promontory of Leucadia.

THIS is the spot :—'tis here tradition says
That hopeless love from this high towering rock
Leaps headlong to oblivion or to death.
Oh, 'tis a giddy height ! my dizzy head
Swims at the precipice—'tis death to fall !

“ Lie still, thou coward heart ! this is no time
To shake with thy strong throbs the frame convulsed,
To die,—to be at rest,—oh, pleasant thought !
Perchance to leap and live ; the soul all-still,
And the wild tempest of the passions husht
In one deep calm ; the heart, no more diseased
By the quick ague fits of hope and fear,
Quietly cold !

“ Presiding Powers, look down !
In vain to you I poured my earnest prayers,
In vain I sung your praises : chiefly thou,
Venus ! ungrateful goddess, whom my lyre
Hymned with such full devotion ! Lesbian groves,
Witness how often, at the languid hour
Of summer twilight, to the melting song
Ye gave your choral echoes ! Grecian maids,
Who hear with downcast look and flushing cheek

That lay of love, bear witness! and ye youths,
 Who hang enraptfired on the impassioned strain,
 Gazing with eloquent eye, even till the heart
 Sinks in the deep delirium! and ye, too,
 Ages unborn! bear witness ye, how hard
 Her fate who hymned the votive hymn in vain!
 Ungrateful goddess! I have hung my lute
 In yonder holy pile: my hand no more
 Shall wake the melodies that failed to move
 The heart of Phaon—yet when Rumour tells
 How from Leucadia Sappho hurled her down
 A self-devoted victim,—he may melt
 Too late in pity, obstinate to love.

“O haunt his midnight dreams, black Nemesis!
 Whom, self-conceiving in the inmost depths
 Of Chaos, blackest Night long-labouring bore,
 When the stern Destinies, her elder brood,
 And shapeless Death, from that more monstrous birth
 Leapt shuddering! haunt his slumbers, Nemesis!
 Scorch with the fires of Phlegethon his heart,
 Till helpless, hopeless, heaven-abandoned wretch,
 He too shall seek beneath the unfathomed deep
 To hide him from thy fury.

“How the sea
 Far distant glitters as the sun-beams smile
 And gayly wanton o’er its heaving breast!
 Phœbus shines forth, nor wears one cloud to mourn
 His votary’s sorrows! God of day, shine on;—
 By men despised, forsaken by the gods,
 I supplicate no more.

“How many a day,
 O pleasant Lesbos! in thy secret streams”
 Delighted have I plunged, from the hot sun
 Screened by the o’er-arching grove’s delightful shade,
 And pillowed on the waters! Now the waves
 Shall chill me to repose.

“ Tremendous height !
 Scarce to the brink will these rebellious limbs
 Support me. Hark ! how the rude deep below
 Roars round the rugged base, as if it called
 Its long-reluctant victim ! I will come.
 One leap, and all is over ! The deep rest
 Of death, or tranquil apathy's dead calm,
 Welcome alike to me. Away, vain fears !
 Phaon is cold, and why should Sappho live ?
 Phaon is cold, or with some fairer one—
 Thought worse than death ! ”

She throws herself from the precipice.

XIMALPOCA.

Scene. —The Temple of Mexitli.

SUBJECTS ! friends ! children ! I may call you children,

For I have ever borne a father's love
 Towards you ; it is thirteen years since first
 You saw me in the robes of royalty,—
 Since here the multitudes of Mexico
 Hail'd me their king. I thank you, friends, that now,
 In equal numbers and with equal love,
 You come to grace my death.

For thirteen years
 What I have been, you know : that with all care,
 That with all justice and all gentleness,
 Seeking your weal, I govern'd. Is there one
 Whom I have injured ? one whose just redress
 I have denied, or baffled by delay ?
 Let him come forth, that so no evil tongue

Speak shame of me hereafter. O my people,
Not by my sins have I drawn down upon me
The wrath of Heaven.

The wrath is heavy on me !
Heavy ! a burthen more than I can bear !
I have endured contempt, insult and wrongs
From that Acolhuan tyrant ! should I seek
Revenge ? alas my people, we are few,—
Feeble our growing state ! it hath not yet
Rooted itself to bear the hurricane ;
It is the lion-cub that tempts not yet
The tiger's full-aged fury. Mexicans,
He sent to bid me wear a woman's robe ;—
When was the day that ever I look'd back
In battle ? Mexicans, the wife I loved,
To faith and friendship trusted, in despite
Of me, of heaven, he seized, and spurned her back
Polluted !—coward villain ! and he lurks
Behind his armies and his multitudes,
And mocks my idle wrath !—it is not fit,
It is not possible that I should live !
Live ! and deserve to be the finger-mark
Of slave-contempt ! his blood I cannot reach,
But in my own all stains shall be effaced,
It shall blot out the marks of infamy,
And when the warriors of the days to come
Tell of Ximalpoca, it shall be said .
He died the brave man's death !

Not of the God
Unworthy, do I seek his altar thus,
A voluntary victim. And perchance
The sacrifice of life may profit ye,
My people, tho' all living efforts fail'd
By fortune, not by fault.

Cease your lament !
And if your ill-doom'd King deserved your love,
Say of him to your children, he was one

Who bravely bore misfortune ; who when life
 Became dishonour, shook his body off,
 And join'd the spirits of the heroes dead.
 Yes ! not in Miclanteuctli's dark abode
 With cowards shall your King receive his doom ;
 Not in the icy caverns of the North
 Suffer thro' endless ages ! He shall join
 The spirits of the brave, with them at morn
 Shall issue from the eastern gate of Heaven,
 And follow thro' his fields of light the Sun ;
 With them shall raise the song, and weave the dance ;
 Sport in the stream of splendour ; company
 Down to the western palace of his rest
 The Prince of glory ; and with equal eye
 Endure his centered radiance. Not of you
 Forgetful, O my people, even then ;
 But often in the amber cloud of noon
 Diffus'd, will I o'erspread your summer fields,
 And on the freshened maize and brightening meads
 Shower plenty.

Spirits of my valiant Sires,
 I come ! Mexitli, never at thy shrine
 Flow'd braver blood ! never a nobler heart
 Steam'd up its life to thee ? Priest of the God,
 Perform your office !

THE WIFE OF FERGUS.

Scene.—The Palace Court. . The Queen speaking from the
 Battlements.

CEASE—cease your torments ! spare the sufferers !
 Scotchmen, not theirs the deed ;—the crime was mine,
 Mine is the glory.

Idle threats ! I stand
 Secure. All access to these battlements
 Is barr'd beyond your sudden strength to force ;
 And lo ! the dagger by which Fergus died !
 Shame on ye, Scotchmen, that a woman's hand
 Was left to do this deed ! Shame on ye, 'Thanes,
 Who with slave-patience have so long endured
 The wrongs, and insolence of tyranny !
 Ye coward race !—that not a husband's sword
 Smote that adulterous King ! that not a wife
 Revenged her own pollution ; in his blood
 Wash'd her soul pure, and for the sin compell'd
 Aton'd by virtuous murder ! O my God !
 Of what beast matter hast thou moulded them
 To bear with wrongs like these ? There was a time
 When if the bard had feign'd you such a tale
 Your eyes had throbb'd with anger, and your hands
 In honest instinct would have grasped the sword.
 O miserable men, who have disgraced
 Your fathers, whom your sons must blush to name !

Ay,—ye can threaten me ! ye can be brave
 In anger to a woman ! one whose virtue
 Upbraids your coward vice ; whose name will live
 Honoured and prais'd in song, when not a hand
 Shall root from your forgotten monuments
 The cankering moss. Fools ! fools ! to think that
 death

Is not a thing familiar to my mind !
 As if I knew not what must consummate
 My glory ! as if aught that earth can give
 Could tempt me to endure the load of life !
 Scotchmen ! ye saw when Fergus to the altar
 Led me, his maiden Queen. Ye blest me then :
 I heard you bless me,—and I thought that Heaven
 Had heard you also, and that I was blest,
 For I loved Fergus. Bear me witness, God !

With what a sacred heart-sincerity
 My lips pronounced the unrecallable vow
 That made me his,—him mine ; bear witness, Thou !
 Before whose throne I this day must appear,
 Stained with his blood and mine ! My heart was his,
 His in the strength of all its first affections.
 In all obedience, in all love, I kept
 Holy my marriage vow. Behold me, Thaness !
 Time hath not changed the face on which his eye
 So often dwelt, when with assiduous care
 He sought my love ; with seeming truth, for one,
 Sincere herself, impossible to doubt.
 Time hath not changed that face.—I speak not now
 With pride of beauties that will feed the worm
 To-morrow ! but with joyful pride I say,
 That if the truest and most perfect love
 Deserved requital, such was ever mine.
 How often, reeking from the adulterous bed,
 Have I received him ! and with no complaint.
 Neglect and insult, cruelty and scorn,
 Long, long, did I endure, and long curb down
 The indignant nature.

Tell your countrymen,
 Scotchmen, what I have spoken ! say to them
 Ye saw the Queen of Scotland lift the dagger
 Red from her husband's heart ;—that in her own
 She plunged it.

Stabs herself.

Tell them, also, that she felt
 No guilty fear in death.

LUCRETIA.

Scene.—The House of Collatine.

WELCOME, my Father! good Valerius,
Welcome! and thou too, Brutus! Ye were both
My wedding guests, and fitly ye are come.
My husband—Collatine—alas! no more
Lucretia's husband, for thou shalt not clasp
Pollution to thy bosom,—hear me on!
For I will tell thee all.

I sat at eve
Spinning amid my maidens as I wont,
When from the camp at Ardea, Sextus came.
Curb down thy swelling feelings, Collatine!
I little liked the man! yet, for he came
From Ardea, for he brought me news of thee,
I gladly gave him welcome, gladly listened,—
Thou canst not tell how gladly,—to his tales
Of battles, and the long and perilous siege!
And when I laid me down at night to sleep,
'Twas with a lighten'd heart,—I knew thee safe;
My visions were of thee.

Nay, hear me out!
And be thou wise in vengeance, so thy wife
Not vainly shall have suffered. I have wrought
My soul up to the business of this hour,
That it may stir your noble spirits, prompt
Such glorious deeds, that ages yet unborn
Shall bless my fate. At midnight I awoke;—
The Tarquin was beside me! O my husband!
Where wert thou, then? gone was my rebel strength—
All power of utterance gone! astonish'd, stunn'd,
I saw the coward ruffian, heard him urge

His damned suit, and bid me tamely yield,—
Yield to dishonour. When he proffered death,—
Oh, I had leapt to meet the merciful sword!
But that with most accursed vows he vowed
That he would lay a dead slave by my side,
Murdering my spotless honour—Collatine!
From what an anguish have I rescued thee!
And thou, my father, wretched as thou art,
Thou miserable, childish, poor old man,
Think, father, what that agony had been!
Now thou mayst sorrow for me, thou mayst bless
The memory of thy poor polluted child.

Look if it have not kindled Brutus' eye!
Mysterious man! at last I know thee now,
I see thy dawning glories! To the grave
Not unrevenged Lucretia shall descend;
Not always shall her wretched country wear
The Tarquin's yoke! Ye will deliver Rome,
And I have comfort in this dreadful hour.

Thinkest thou, my husband, that I dreaded death?
O Collatine! the weapon that had gored
My bosom, had been ease,—been happiness,—
Elysium, to the hell of his hot grasp.
Judge if Lucretia could have fear'd to die!

Stabs herself.

POEMS ON THE SLAVE-TRADE.

I am innocent of this blood, SEE YE TO IT !

SONNETS.

Hold your mad hands ! for ever on your plain
Must the gorged vulture clog his beak with
blood ?
For ever must your Niger's tainted flood
Roll to the ravenous shark his banquet slain ?
Hold your mad hands ! what demon prompts to rear
The arm of slaughter ? on your savage shore
Can hell-sprung glory claim the feast of gore,
With laurels, watered by the widow's tear,
Wreathing his helmet crown ? Lift high the spear !
And like the desolating whirlwind's sweep,
Plunge ye yon bark of anguish in the deep ;
For the pale fiend cold-hearted Commerce there
Breathes his gold-gendered pestilence afar,
And calls, to share the prey, his kindred demon War.

II.

Why dost thou beat thy breast and rend thine hair,
And to the deaf sea pour thy frantic cries ?
Before the gale the laden vessel flies ;
The heavens all-favouring smile, the breeze is fair ;
Hark to the clamours of the exulting crew ;

Hark how their thunders mock the patient skies ;
 Why dost thou shriek, and strain thy red-swollen
 eyes,
 As the white sail dim lessens from thy view ?
 Go pine in want, and anguish, and despair,
 There is no mercy found in human-kind—
 Go, widow, to thy grave, and rest thee there !
 But may the God of justice bid the wind
 Whelm that curs'd bark beneath the mountain wave
 And bless with liberty and death the slave !

III.

OH, he is worn with toil ! the big drops run
 Down his dark' cheek ; hold—hold thy merciless
 hand,
 Pale tyrant ! for beneath thy hard command
 O'erwearied nature sinks. The scorching sun,
 As pitiless as proud prosperity,*
 Darts on him his full beams ; gasping he lies,
 Arraigning with his looks the patient skies,
 While that inhuman trader lifts on high
 The mangling scourge. O ye who at your ease
 Sip the blood-sweetened beverage ! thoughts like
 these
 Haply ye scorn : I thank thee, gracious God,
 That I do feel upon my cheek the glow
 Of indignation, when beneath the red
 A sable' brother writhes in silent woe.

IV.

'Tis night ; the mercenary tyrants sleep
 As undisturbed as justice ! but no more
 The wretched slave, as on his native shore,
 Rests on his rosy couch : he wakes to weep !

Though through the toil and anguish of the day
 No tear escaped him, not one suffering groan,
 Beneath the twisted thong : he weeps alone
 In bitterness ; thinking that far away,
 Though the gay Negroes join the midnight song,
 Though merriment resounds on Niger's shore,
 She whom he loves, far from the cheerful throng,
 Stands sad, and gazes from her lowly door
 With dim-grown eye, silent and woe-begone,
 And weeps for him who will return no more.

V.

DID then the Negro rear at last the sword
 Of vengeance ? drenched he deep its thirsty blade
 In the hard heart of his tyrannic lord ?
 Oh ! who shall blame him ? through the midnight
 shade
 Still o'er his tortured memory rushed the thought
 Of every past delight ; his native grove,
 Friendship's best joys, and liberty and love,
 All lost for ever ! then remembrance wrought
 His soul to madness : round his restless bed
 Freedom's pale spectre stalked, with a stern smile
 Pointing the wounds of slavery, the while
 She shook her chains and hung her sullen head :
 No more on Heaven he calls with fruitless breath,
 But sweetens with revenge the draught of death.

VI.

HIGH in the air exposed the slave is hung,
 To all the birds of heaven their living food !
 He groans not, though awaked by that fierce sun,
 New tortures live to drink their parent blood !
 He groans not, though the gorging vulture tear

The quivering fibre ! Hither gaze, O ye
 Who tore this man from peace and liberty !
 Gaze hither, ye who weigh with scrupulous care
 The right and prudent ; for beyond the grave
 There is another world ! and call to mind,
 Ere your decrees proclaim to all mankind
 Murder is legalised, that there the slave,
 Before the Eternal, "thunder-tongued shall plead
 Against the deep damnation of your deed."

TO THE GENIUS OF AFRICA.

O THOU, who from the mountain's height
 Roll'st down thy clouds with all their weight
 Of waters to old Nile's majestic tide ;
 Or o'er the dark sepulchral plain,
 Recallest Carthage in her ancient pride,
 The mistress of the main ;
 Hear, Genius, hear thy children's cry !
 Not always shouldst thou love to brood
 Stern o'er the desert solitude,
 Where seas of sand toss their hot surges high ;
 Nor, Genius, should the midnight song
 Detain thee in some milder mood
 The palmy plains among,
 Where Gambia to the torches' light
 Flows radiant through the awakened night.
 Ah linger not to hear the song !
 Genius, avenge thy children's wrong !
 The demon Commerce on your shore
 Pours all the horrors of his train,
 And hark, where from the field of gore
 Howls the hyena o'er the slain ;

Lo! where the flaming village fires the ski
Avenging Power, awake! arise!

Arise, thy children's wrongs redress!
Ah heed the mother's wretchedness,
When in the hot infectious air,
O'er her sick babe she bows oppress—
Ah hear her when the Christians tare
The drooping infant from her breast;
Whelmed in the waters he shall rest!
Hear thou the wretched mother's cries,
Avenging Power, awake! arise!

By the rank infected air
That taints those dungeons of despair,
By those who there imprisoned die,
Where the black herd promiscuous lie;
By the scourges blackened o'er,
And stiff and hard with human gore,
By every groan of deep distress,
By every curse of wretchedness,
By all the train of crimes that flow
From the hopelessness of woe,
By every drop of blood bespilt,
By Afric's wrongs and Europe's guilt,
Awake! arise! avenge!

And thou hast heard! and o'er their blood-fed
plains
Swept thine avenging hurricanes;
And bade thy storms, with whirlwind roar,
Dash their proud navies on the shore;
And where their armies claimed the fight,
Withered the warrior's might;
And o'er the unholy host, with baneful breath,
There, Genius, thou hast breathed the gales of death.

ENGLISH ECLOGUES.

The following Eclogues, I believe, bear no resemblance to any poems in our language. This species of composition has become popular in Germany, and I was induced to attempt it by an account of the German Idylls given me in conversation. They cannot properly be styled imitations, as I am ignorant of that language at present, and have never seen any translations or specimens in this kind.

With bad Eclogues I am sufficiently acquainted, from Tityrus and Corydon down to our English Strephons and Thirsisses. No kind of poetry can boast of more illustrious names, or is more distinguished by the servile dulness of imitated nonsense. Pastoral writers, "more silly than their sheep," have like their sheep gone on in the same track one after another. Gay stumbled into a new path. His Eclogues were the only ones which interested me when I was a boy, and did not know they were burlesque. The subject would furnish matter for a long essay, but this is not the place for it.

How far poems requiring almost a colloquial plainness of language may accord with the public taste, I am doubtful. They have been subjected to able criticism, and revised with care.

THE OLD MANSION.

STRANGER.

Old friend! why, you seem bent on parish duty,
Breaking the highway stones; and 'tis a task
Somewhat too hard, methinks, for age like yours.

OLD MAN.

Why, yes! for one with such a weight of years
Upon his back. . . . I've lived here, man and boy,
In this same parish, near the age of man;
For I am hard upon threescore and ten.
I can remember, sixty years ago,

The beautifying of this mansion here,
When my late lady's father, the old squire,
Came to the estate.

STRANGER.

Why, then you have outlasted
All his improvements, for you see they're making
Great alterations here.

OLD MAN.

Ay, great indeed !
And if my poor old lady could rise up—
God rest her soul !—'twould grieve her to behold
The wicked work is here.

STRANGER.

They've set about it
In right good earnest. All the front is gone :
Here's to be turf, they tell me, and a road
Round to the door. There were some yew-trees, too,
Stood in the court.

OLD MAN.

Ay, master ! fine old trees !
My grandfather could just remember back
When they were planted there. It was my task
To keep them trimm'd, and 'twas a pleasure to me :
All straight and smooth, and like a great green wall !
My poor old lady many a time would come
And tell me where to shear ; for she had played
In childhood under them, and 'twas her pride
To keep them in their beauty. Plague, I say,
On their new-fangled whimsies ! We shall have
A modern shrubbery here stuck full of firs
And your pert poplar trees. I could as soon
Have plough'd my father's grave as cut them down !

STRANGER.

But 'till be lighter and more cheerful now—
 A fine smooth turf, and with a gravel road
 Round for the carriage—now it suits my taste.
 I like a shrubbery, too, it looks so fresh ;
 And then there's some variety about it.
 In spring the lilac and the Gueldres rose,
 And the laburnum with its golden flowers
 Waving in the wind. And when the autumn comes,
 The bright red berries of the mountain ash,
 With firs enough in winter to look green,
 And show that something lives. Sure this is better
 Than a great hedge of yew that makes it look
 All the year round like winter, and for ever
 Dropping its poisonous leaves from the under boughs
 So dry and bare !

OLD MAN.

Ah ! so the new squire thinks ;
 And pretty work he makes of it. What 'tis
 To have a stranger come to an old house !

STRANGER.

It seems you know him not ?

OLD MAN.

No, sir, not I.
 They tell me he's expected daily now ;
 But in my lady's time he never came
 But once, for they were very distant kin.
 If he had played about here when a child
 In that fore court, and eat the yew-berries,
 And sate in the porch threading the jessamine flowers,
 That fell so thick, he had not had the heart
 To mar all thus. ~

STRANGER.

Come—come! all is not wrong.
Those old dark windows—

OLD MAN.

They're demolish'd too,—
As if he could not see through casement glass!
The very red-breasts that so regular
Came to my lady for her morning crumbs,
Wont know the window now!

STRANGER.

Nay, they were high,
And then so darken'd up with jessamine,
Harbouring the vermin. That was a fine tree,
However. Did it not grow in and line
The porch?

OLD MAN.

All over it: it did one good
To pass within ten yards when 'twas in blossom.
There was a sweet-brier, too, that grew beside:
My lady loved at evening to sit there
And knit; and her old dog lay at her feet
And slept in the sun—'twas an old favourite dog:
• She did not love him less that he was old
And feeble, and he always had a place
By the fire-side, and when he died at last
She made me dig a grave in the garden for him.
Ah! she was good to all! a woful day
'Twas for the poor when to her grave she went!

STRANGER.

They lost a friend then?

OLD MAN.

You're a stranger here,
Or you would n't ask that question. Were they sick?

She had rare cordial waters, and for herbs
She could have taught the doctors. Then at winter
When weekly she distributed the bread
In the poor old porch, to see her and to hear
The blessings on her! And I warrant them
They were a blessing to her when her wealth
Had been no comfort else. At Christmas, sir!
It would have warm'd your heart if you had seen
Her Christmas kitchen; how the blazing fire
Made her fine pewter shine, and holly boughs
So cheerful red; and as for missletoe,
The finest bough that grew in the country round
Was mark'd for madam. Then her old ale went
So bountiful about!—a Christmas cask,—
And 'twas a noble one!—God help me, sir!
But I shall never see such days again.

STRANGER.

Things may be better yet than you suppose,
And you should hope the best.

OLD MAN.

It don't look well,
These alterations, sir! I'm an old man
And love the good old fashions; we don't find
Old bounty in new houses. They've destroyed
All that my lady loved; her favourite walk
Grubb'd up, and they do say that the great row
Of elms behind the house, that meet a-top,
They must fall too. Well! well! I did not think
To live to see all this, and 'tis, perhaps,
A comfort I sha'n't live to see it long.

STRANGER.

But sure all changes are not needs for the worse,
My friend.

OLD MAN.

Mayhap they mayn't, sir ;—for all that,
I like what I've been used to. I remember
All this from a child up, and now to lose it,
'Tis losing an old friend. There's nothing left
As 'twas. I go abroad and only meet
With men whose fathers I remember boys ;
The brook that used to run before my door,
That's gone to the great pond ; the trees I learnt
To climb are down ; and I see nothing now
That tells me of old times, except the stones
In the churchyard. You are young, sir, and I hope,
Have many years in store ; but pray to God
You mayn't be left the last of all your friends.

STRANGER.

Well! well! you've one friend more than you're aware of.
If the squire's taste don't suit with yours, I warrant
That's all you'll quarrel with : walk in and taste
His beer, old friend ! and see if your old lady
E'er broached a better cask. You did not know me,
But we're acquainted now. 'Twould not be easy
To make you like the outside ; but within
That is not changed, my friend ! you'll always find
The same old bounty and old welcome there.

THE GRANDMOTHER'S TALE.

JANE.

HARRY ! I'm tired of playing. We'll draw round
The fire, and grandmamma, perhaps, will tell us
One of her stories.

HARRY.

Ay, dear grandmamma!
A pretty story; something dismal now;
A bloody murder.

JANE.

Or about a ghost.

GRANDMOTHER.

Nay, nay, I should but frighten ye. You know
The other night when I was telling ye
About the light in the churchyard, how you trembled
Because the screech-owl hooted at the window,
And would not go to bed.

JANE.

Why, grandmamma,
You said yourself you did not like to hear him.
Pray now! we wont be frightened.

GRANDMOTHER.

Well, well, children!
But you've heard all my stories. Let me see,—
Did I never tell you how the smuggler murdered
The woman down at Pill?

HARRY.

No,—rever! never!

GRANDMOTHER.

Not how he cut her head off in the stable?

HARRY.

Oh!—now!—do tell us that!

GRANDMOTHER.

You must have heard
Your mother, children, often tell of her.

She used to weed in the garden here, and worm
 Your uncle's dogs,* and serve the house with coal :
 And glad enough she was in winter time
 To drive her asses here ; it was cold work
 To follow the slow beasts through sleet and snow,
 And here she found a comfortable meal,
 And a brave fire to thaw her, for Poor Moll
 Was always welcome.

HARRY.

Oh ! 'twas blear-eyed Moll,
 The collier woman—a great ugly woman.
 I've heard of her.

GRANDMOTHER.

Ugly enough, poor soul !
 At ten yards' distance, you could hardly tell
 If it were man or woman ; for her voice
 Was rough as our old mastiff's, and she wore
 A man's old coat and hat,—and then her face !
 There was a merry story told of her,
 How, when the pressgang came to take her husband
 As they were both in bed, she heard them coming,
 Drest John up in her nightcap, and herself
 Put on his clothes, and went before the captain.

JANE.

And so they prest a woman !

GRANDMOTHER.

'Twas a trick
 She dearly loved to tell, and all the country
 Soon knew the jest, for she was used to travel

* I know not whether this cruel and stupid custom is common in other parts of England. It is supposed to prevent the dogs from doing any mischief should they afterwards become mad.

For miles around. All weathers and all hours
 She crossed the hill, as hardy as her beasts,
 Bearing the wind and rain and winter frosts.
 And if she did not reach her home at night,
 She laid her down in the stable with her asses,
 And slept as sound as they did.

HARRY.

With her asses?

GRANDMOTHER.

Yes, and she loved her beasts. For though, poor
 wretch,
 She was a terrible reprobate, and swore
 Like any trooper, she was always good
 To the dumb creatures; never loaded them
 Beyond their strength; and rather, I believe,
 Would stint herself then let the poor beasts want,
 Because, she said, they could not ask for food.
 I never saw her stick fall heavier on them
 Than just with its own weight. She little thought
 This tender-heartedness would be her death.
 There was a fellow who had oftentimes,
 As if he took delight in cruelty,
 Ill-used her asses. He was one who lived
 By smuggling, and, for she had often met him
 Crossing the down at night, she threatened him,
 If he tormented them again, to inform
 Of his unlawful ways. Well—so it was—
 'Twas what they both were born to; he provoked her,
 She laid an information, and one morning
 They found her in the stable, her throat cut
 From ear to ear, 'till the head only hung
 Just by a bit of skin.

JANE.

Oh dear! oh dear!

HARRY.

I hope they hung the man !

GRANDMOTHER.

They took him up ;
 There was no proof, no one had seen the deed,
 And he was set at liberty. But God,
 Whose eye beholdeth all things, He had seen
 The murder, and the murderer knew that God
 Was witness to his crime. He fled the place,
 But nowhere could he fly the avenging hand
 Of Heaven, but nowhere could the murderer rest,
 A guilty conscience haunted him ; by day,
 By night, in company, in solitude,
 Restless and wretched, did he bear upon him
 The weight of blood ; her cries were in his ears ;
 Her stifled groans, as when he knelt upon her,
 Always he heard ; always he saw her stand
 Before his eyes ; even in the dead of night,
 Distinctly seen as though in the broad sun,
 She stood beside the murderer's bed, and yawn'd
 Her ghastly wound ; till life itself became
 A punishment at last he could not bear,
 And he confess'd it all, * and gave himself
 To death, so terrible, he said, it was
 To have a guilty conscience.

HARRY.

Was he hung, then ?

GRANDMOTHER.

Hung and anatomised. Poor wretched man,
 Your uncles went to see him on his trial ;

* There may probably be some persons living who remember these circumstances. They happened many years ago, in the neighbourhood of Bristol. The woman's name was Bess. The stratagem by which she preserved her husband from the press-gang is also related of her.

He was so pale, so thin, so hollow-eyed,
 And such a horror in his meagre face,
 They said he look'd like one who never slept.
 He begged the prayers of all who saw his end,
 And met his death with fears that well might warn
 From guilt, though not without a hope in Christ.

THE FUNERAL.

The story related in this Eclogue is strictly true. I met the funeral, and learnt the circumstances, in a village in Hampshire. The indifference of the child was mentioned to me; indeed, no addition whatever has been made to the story.

THE coffin, as I past across the lane,
 Came sudden on my view. It was not here
 A sight of every day, as in the streets
 Of the great city, and we paused and ask'd
 Who to the grave was going. They replied,
 It was a village girl, one who had borne
 An eighteen months' strange illness, and had pined
 With such slow wasting that the hour of death
 Came welcome to her. We pursued our way
 To the house of mirth, and with that idle talk
 Which passes o'er the mind and is forgot,
 We wore away the time. But it was eve
 When homewardly I went, and in the air
 Was that cool freshness, that discolouring shade,
 That makes the eye turn inward. Then I heard
 Over the vale the heavy toll of death
 Sound slow; it made me think upon the dead.
 I questioned more, and learnt her sorrowful tale.
 She bore unhusbanded a mother's name,
 And he who should have cherished her, far off
 Sail'd on the seas, self-exiled from his home,

For he was poor. Left thus, a wretched one,
Soon made a mock of her, and evil tongues
Were busy with her name. She had one ill
Heavier—neglect—forgetfulness from him
Whom she had loved so dearly. Once he wrote,
But only once that drop of comfort came
To mingle with her cup of wretchedness ;
And when his parents had some tidings from him,
There was no mention of poor Hannah there,
Or 'twas the cold inquiry, bitterer
Than silence. So she pined and pined away,
And for herself and baby toil'd and toil'd,
Nor did she, even on her death-bed, rest
From labour, knitting there with arms outstretch'd,
Till she sunk with very weakness. * Her old mother
Omitted no kind office, working for her,
Albeit her hardest working barely earn'd
Enough to keep life struggling, and prolong
The pains of grief and sickness. Thus she lay
On the sick bed of poverty, so worn
With her long suffering and those painful thoughts
Which at her heart lay rankling, and so weak,
That she could make no effort to express
Affection for her infant ; and the child,
Whose lisping love perhaps had solaced her,
With natural infantine ingratitude
Shunn'd her as one indifferent. She was past
That anguish, for she felt her hour draw on,
And 'twas her only comfort now to think
Upon the grave. " Poor girl ! " her mother said,
" Thou hast suffered much ! " " Ay, mother ! there
is none
Can tell what I have suffered ! " she replied,
" But I shall soon be where the weary rest."
And soon the rest she prayed for was vouchsafed,
For it pleased God to take her to His mercy.

THE SAILOR'S MOTHER.

WOMAN.

SIR, for the love of God, some small relief
To a poor woman !

TRAVELLER.

Whither are you bound ?
'Tis a late hour to travel o'er these downs,
No house for miles around us, and the way
Dreary and wild. The evening wind already
Makes one's teeth chatter, and the very sun,
Setting so pale behind those thin white clouds,
Looks cold. 'Twill be a bitter night !

WOMAN.

Ay, sir,
'Tis cutting keen ! I smart at every breath ;
Heaven knows how I shall reach my journey's end
For the way is long before me, and my feet,
God help me ! sore with travelling. I would glad
If it pleased God, lie down at once and die.

TRAVELLER.

Nay, nay, cheer up ! a little food and rest
Will comfort you ; and then your journey's end
Will make amends for all. You shake your head,
And weep. Is it some evil business then
That leads you from your home ?

WOMAN.

Sir, I am going
To see my son at Plymouth, sadly hurt
In the late action, and in the hospital
Dying, I fear me, now.

TRAVELLER.

Perhaps your fears
 Make evil worse. Even if a limb be lost
 There may be still enough for comfort left ;
 An arm or leg shot off, there's yet the heart
 'To keep life warm, and he may live to talk
 With pleasure of the glorious fight that maim'd him,
 Proud of his loss. Old England's gratitude
 Makes the maimed sailor happy.*

WOMAN.

'Tis not that,—
 An arm or leg—I could have borne with that.
 'Twas not a ball, it was some cursed thing
 Which bursts and burns, that hurt him. Something,
 sir,
 They do not use on board our English ships,
 It is so wicked.*

TRAVELLER.

Rascals! a mean art
 Of cruel cowardice, yet all in vain!

WOMAN.

Yes, sir! and they should show no mercy to them
 For making use of such unchristian arms.
 I had a letter from the hospital,
 He got some friend to write it, and he tells me
 That my poor boy has lost his precious eyes—
 Burnt out. Alas! that I should ever live

* The stink-pots used on board the French ships. In the engagement between the *Mars* and *L'Hercule*, some of our sailors were shockingly mangled by them: one in particular, as described in the Eclogue, lost both his eyes. It would be right and humane to employ means of destruction, could they be discovered, powerful enough to destroy fleets and armies; but to use anything that only inflicts additional torture upon the victims of our war systems, is cruel and wicked.

To see this wretched day ;—they tell me, sir,
 There is no cure for wounds like his. Indeed
 'Tis a hard journey that I go upon
 To such a dismal end.

TRAVELLER.

He yet may live.
 But if the worst should chance, why you must bear
 The will of Heaven with patience. Were it not
 Some comfort to reflect your son has fallen
 Fighting his country's cause? and for yourself,
 You will not in unpitied poverty,
 Be left to mourn his loss. Your grateful country,
 Amid the triumph of her victory,
 Remembers those who paid its price of blood,
 And with a noble charity relieves
 The widow and the orphan.

WOMAN.

God reward them!
 God bless them! it will help me in my age;
 But, sir, it will not pay me for my child!

TRAVELLER.

Was he your only child?

WOMAN.

My only one,
 The stay and comfort of my widowhood,
 A dear good boy! When first he went to sea,
 I felt what it would come to—something told me
 I should be childless soon. But tell me, sir,
 If it be true that a for a hurt like his
 There is no cure? please God to spare his life
 Though he be blind, yet I should be so thankful!
 I can remember there was a blind man
 Lived in our village, one from his youth up

Quite dark, and yet he was a merry man,
And he had none to tend on him so well
As I would tend my boy!

TRAVELLER.

Of this be sure,
His hurts are look'd to well, and the best help
The land affords, as rightly is his due,
Ever at hand. How happened it he left you?
Was a seafaring life his early choice?

WOMAN.

No, sir. Poor fellow; he was wise enough
To be content at home, and 'twas a home
As comfortable, sir, even though I say it,
As any in the country. He was left
A little boy when his poor father died,
Just old enough to totter by himself
And call his mother's name. We two were all,
And as we were not left quite destitute,
We bore up well. In the summer time I worked
Sometimes a-field. Then I was famed for knitting.
And in long winter nights my spinning wheel
Seldom stood still. We had kind neighbours, too,
And never felt distress. So he grew up
A comely lad and wondrous well disposed;
I taught him well; there was not in the parish
A child who said his prayers more regular,
Or answered readier through his catechism.
* If I had foreseen this! but 'tis a blessing
We don't know what we're born to!

TRAVELLER.

But how came it
He chose to be a sailor?

WOMAN.

You shall hear, sir.

As he grew up he used to watch the birds
 In the corn, child's work, you know, and easily done.
 'Tis an idle sort of task ; so he built up
 A little hut of wicker-work and clay
 Under the hedge, to shelter him in rain.
 And then he took, for very idleness,
 To making traps to catch the plunderers.
 All sorts of cunning traps that boys can make—
 Propping a stone to fall and shut them in,
 Or crush them with its weight, or else a springe
 Swung on a bough: He made them cleverly,—
 And I,—poor foolish woman ! I was pleased
 To see the boy so handy. You may guess
 What followed, sir, from this unlucky skill.
 He did what he should not when he was older :
 I warn'd him oft enough ; but he was caught
 In wiring hares at last, and had his choice—
 The prison or the ship.

TRAVELLER.

The choice at least

Was kindly left him, and for broken laws
 This was, methinks, no heavy punishment.

WOMAN.

So I was told, sir. And I tried to think so,
 But 'twas a sad blow to me ! I was used
 To sleep at nights as sweetly as a child,—
 Now if the wind blew rough, it made me start
 And think of my poor boy, tossing about
 Upon the roaring seas. And then I seem'd
 To feel that it was hard to take him from me
 For such a little fault. But he was wrong,
 Oh very wrong,—a murrain on his traps !
 See what they've brought him to !

TRAVELLER.

Well! well! take comfort,
He will be taken care of if he lives;
And should you lose your child, this is a country
Where the brave sailor never leaves a parent
To weep for him in want.

WOMAN.

Sir, I shall want
No succour long. In the common course of years
I soon must be at rest, and 'tis a comfort
When grief is hard upon me, to reflect
It only leads me to that rest the sooner.

THE WITCH.

NATHANILL.

FATHER! here, Father! I have found a horse-shoe!
Faith, it was just in time, for t'other night
I laid two straws across at Margery's door,
And afterwards I feared that she might do me
A mischief for't. There was the Miller's boy,
Who set his dog at that black cat of her's,
I met him upon crutches, and he told me
'T was all her evil eye.

FATHER.

'T is rare good luck;
I would have gladly given a crown for one
If t'would have done as well. But where didst find it?

NATHANIEL.

Down on the common. I was was going a-field,
And neighbour Saunders pass'd me on his mare:

He had hardly said "good day," before I saw
 The shoe drop off; t' was just upon my tongue
 To call him back: it makes no difference, does it,
 Because I know whose t' was?

FATHER.

Why, no, it can't.
 The shoe's the same you know, and you *did* find it.

NATHANIEL.

That mare of his has got a plaguety road
 To travel, father, and if he should lame her,
 For she is but tender-footed?

FATHER.

Ay, indeed!
 I should not like to see her limping back,
 Poor beast! but charity begins at home;
 And Nat, there's our own horse in such a way
 This morning!

NATHANIEL.

Why, he han't been rid again!
 Last night I hung a pebble by the manger
 With a hole through, and every body says
 That 't is a special charm against the hags.

FATHER.

It could not be a proper natural hole, then,
 Or 't was not a right pebble; for I found him
 Smoking with sweat, quaking in every limb.
 And panting so! God knows where he had been
 When we were all asleep, through bush and brake,
 Up-hill and down-hill all alike, full stretch
 At such a deadly rate!

NATHANIEL.

By land and water,
 Over the sea, perhaps! I have heard tell

That 't is some thousand miles, almost at the end
 Of the world, where witches go to meet the Devil.
 They used to ride on broomsticks, and to smear
 Some ointment over them, and then away
 Out of the window ! but 't is worse than all
 To worry the poor beasts so. Shame upon it.
 That in a Christian country they should let
 Such creatures live !

FATHER.

And when there's such plain proof !
 I did but threaten her because she robb'd
 Our hedge, and the next night there came a wind
 That made me shake to hear it in my bed !
 How came it that the storm unroofed my barn,
 And only mine in the parish ? look at her,
 And that's enough : she has it in her face,—
 A pair of large, dead eyes, sunk in her head,
 Just like a corpse, and purs'd with wrinkles round ;
 A nose and chin that scarce leave room between
 For her lean fingers to squeeze in the snuff ;
 And when she speaks ! I'd sooner hear a raven
 Croak at my door ! she sits there, nose and knees,
 Smoke-dried and shrivell'd over a starved fire,
 With that black cat beside her, whose great eyes
 Shine like old Beelzebub's ; and, to be sure,
 It must be one of his imps ! ay, nail it hard.

NATHANIEL.

I wish old Margery heard the hammer go !
 She'd curse the music.

FATHER.

Here's the Curate coming ;
 He ought to rid the parish of such vermin.
 In the old times they used to hunt them out,
 And hang them without mercy ; but Lord bless us !
 The world is grown so wicked !

CURATE.

Good day, Farmer!
Nathaniel, what art nailing to the threshold?

NATHANIEL.

A horse-shoe, sir; 't is good to keep off witchcraft;
And we're afraid of Margery.

CURATE.

Poor old woman!
What can you fear from her?

FATHER.

What can we fear?
Who lamed the Miller's boy? who rais'd the wind
That blew my old barn's roof down? who d'ye think
Rides my poor horse a'nights? Who mocks the
hounds?
But let me catch her at that trick again,
And I've a silver bullet ready for her,
One that shall lame her, double how she will.

NATHANIEL.

What makes her sit there moping by herself,
With no soul near her but that great black cat?
And do but look at her!

CURATE.

Poor wretch; half blind
And crooked with her years, without a child
Or friend in her old age, 'tis hard indeed
To have her very miseries made her crimes!
I met her but last week in that hard frost
Which made my young limbs ache, and when I ask'd
What brought her out in the snow, the poor old
woman

Told me that she was forced to crawl abroad
 And pick the hedges, just to keep herself
 From perishing with cold, because no neighbour
 Had pity on her age ; and then she cried,
 And said the children pelted her with snowballs,
 And wish'd that she were dead.

FATHER.

I wish she was !
 She has plagued the parish long enough !

CURATE.

Shame, farmer
 Is that the charity your Bible teaches ?

FATHER.

My Bible does not teach me to love witches.
 I know what's charity ; who pays his tithes
 And poor-rates readier !

CURATE.

Who can better do it ?
 You've been a prudent and industrious man,
 And God has blest your labour.

FATHER.

Why, thank God, sir,
 I've had no reason to complain of fortune.

CURATE.

Complain ! why, you are wealthy. All the parish
 Look up to you.

FATHER.

Perhaps, sir, I could tell
 Guinea for guinea with the warmest of them.

CURATE.

You can afford a little to the poor,
And then, what's better still, you have the heart
To give from your abundance.

FATHER.

God forbid
I should want charity.

CURATE.

Oh! 'tis a comfort
To think at last of riches well employed!
I have been by a death-bed, and know the worth
Of a good deed at that most awful hour
When riches profit not.

Farmer, I'm going
To visit Margery. She is sick, I hear—
Old, poor, and sick! a miserable lot,
And death will be a blessing. You might send her
Some small matter, something comfortable,
That she may go down easier to the grave,
And bless you when she dies.

FATHER.

What! is she going?
Well, God forgive her then! if she has dealt
In the black art. I'll tell my dame of it,
And she shall send her something.

CURATE.

So I'll say;
And take my thanks for her's. [Goes.

FATHER.

That's a good man,
That curate, Nat, of ours, to go and visit

The poor in sickness ; but he don't believe
In witchcraft, and that is not like a Christian.

NATHANIEL.

And so old Margery's dying !

FATHER.

But you know
She may recover ; so drive t'other nail in !

THE RUINED COTTAGE.

Ay, Charles ! I knew that this would fix thine eye,—
This woodbine wreathling round the broken porch,
Its leaves just withering, yet one autumn flower
Still fresh and fragrant ; and yon hollyhock
That through the creeping weeds and nettles tall
Peers taller, and uplifts its column'd stem
Bright with the broad rose-blossoms. I have seen
Many a fallen convent reverend in decay,
And many a time have trod the castle courts
And grass-green halls, yet never did they strike
Home to the heart such melancholy thoughts
As this poor cottage. Look, its little hatch
Fleeced with that gray and wintry moss ; the roof
Part moulder'd in, the rest o'ergrown with weeds,
House-leek, and long thin grass, and greener moss ;
So nature steals on all the works of man,
Sure conqueror she, reclaiming to herself
His perishable piles.

I led thee here, •

Charles, not without design ; for this hath been
My favourite walk even since I was a boy ;
And I remember, Charles, this ruin here,

The neatest, comfortable dwelling-place !
 That when I read in those dear books which first
 Woke in my heart the love of poesy,
 How with the villagers Erminia dwelt,
 And Calidore for a fair shepherdess
 Forgot his quest to learn the shepherd's lore ;
 My fancy drew from this the little hut
 Where that poor princess wept her hopeless love,
 Or where the gentle Calidore at eve
 Led Pastorella home. There was not then
 A weed where all these nettles overtop
 The garden-wall ; but sweet-briar, scenting sweet
 The morning air, rosemary and marjoram,
 All wholesome herbs ; and then, that woodbine
 wreath'd ~

So lavishly around the pillar'd porch
 Its fragrant flowers, that when I pass'd this way,
 After a truant absence hastening home,
 I could not choose but pass with slackened speed
 By that delightful fragrance. Sadly changed
 Is this poor cottage ! and its dwellers, Charles !—
 Theirs is a simple, melancholy tale,—
 There's scarce a village but can fellow it,
 And yet methinks it will not weary thee,
 And should not be untold.

A widow woman

Dwelt with her daughter here ; just above want,
 She lived on some little pittance that sufficed,
 In better times, the needful calls of life,
 Not without comfort. I remember her
 Sitting at evening in that open door-way,
 And spinning in the sun ; methinks I see her
 Raising her eyes and dark-rimmed spectacles,
 To see the passer-by, yet ceasing not
 To twirl her lengthening thread. Or in the garden,
 On some dry summer evening, walking round
 To view her flowers, and pointing, as she leaned

Upon the ivory handle of her stick,
 To some carnation whose o'erheavy head
 Needed support, while with the watering-pot
 Joanna followed, and refresh'd and trimmed
 The drooping plant; Joanna, her dear child,
 As lovely and as happy then as youth
 And innocence could make her.

Charles! it seems

As though I were a boy again, and all
 The mediate years, with their vicissitudes,
 A half-forgotten dream. I see the maid,
 So comely in her Sunday dress! her hair,
 Her bright brown hair, wreath'd in contracting curls;
 And then her cheek! it was a red and white
 That made the delicate hues of art look loathsome.
 The countrymen who, on their way to church
 Were leaning o'er the bridge, loitering to hear
 The bell's last summons, and in idleness
 Watching the stream below, would all look up
 When she pass'd by. And her old mother, Charles!
 When I have heard some erring infidel
 Speak of our faith as of a gloomy creed,
 Inspiring fear and boding wretchedness,
 Her figure has recurr'd; for she did love
 The Sabbath-day, and many a time hath cross'd
 These fields in rain and through the winter snows,
 When I, a graceless boy, wishing myself
 By the fireside, have wondered why *she* came
 Who might have sate at home.

One only care

Hung on her aged spirit. For herself,
 Her path was plain before her, and the close
 Of her long journey near. But then her child,
 Soon to be left alone in this bad world,—
 That was a thought which many a winter night
 Had kept her sleepless; and when prudent love,
 In something better than a servant's state,

Had placed her well at last, it was a pang
Like parting life to part with her dear girl.

One summer, Charles, when at the holydays
Returned from school, I visited again
My old accustomed walks, and found in them
A joy almost like meeting an old friend,
I saw the cottage empty, and the weeds
Already crowding the neglected flowers.
Joanna, by a villain's wiles seduced,
Had played the wanton, and that blow had reach'd
Her mother's heart. She did not suffer long
Her age was feeble, and the heavy blow
Brought her gray hairs with sorrow to the grave.
I pass this ruined dwelling oftentimes,
And think of other days. It wakes in me
A transient sadness ; but the feelings, Charles,
Which ever with these recollections rise,
I trust in God they will not pass away.

THE LAST OF THE FAMILY.

JAMES.

WHAT, Gregory ! you are come, I see, to join us
On this sad business.

GREGORY.

Ay, James, I am come,
But with a heavy heart, God knows it, man !
Where shall we meet the corpse ?

JAMES.

Some hour from hence
By noon, and near about the elms, I take it.

This is not as it should be, Gregory,
 Old men to follow young ones to the grave!
 This morning, when I heard the bell strike out,
 I thought that I had never heard it toll
 So dismally before.

GREGORY.

Well, well! my friend,
 'Tis what we all must come to, soon or late.
 But when a young man dies, in the prime of life,
 One born so well, who might have blest us all
 Many long years!

JAMES.

And then the family
 Extinguish'd in him, and the good old name
 Only to be remember'd on a tomb-stone!
 A name that has gone down from sire to son
 So many generations! Many a time,
 Poor Master Edward, who is now a corpse,
 When but a child, would come to me, and lead me
 To the great family tree, and beg of me
 To tell him stories of his ancestors:
 Of Eustace, he that went to the Holy Land
 With Richard Lion-heart, and that Sir Henry
 Who fought at Cressy in King Edward's wars;
 And then his little eyes would kindle so,
 To hear of their brave deeds. I used to think,
 The bravest of them all would not out-do
 My darling boy!

GREGORY.

'This comes of your great schools
 And college breeding. Plague upon his guardians,
 That would have made him wiser than his fathers!

JAMES.

If his poor father, Gregory, had but lived,

Things would not have been so. He, poor good man !
 Had little of book learning ; but there lived not
 A kinder, nobler-hearted gentleman—
 One better to his tenants. When he died,
 There was not a dry eye for miles around.
 Gregory, I thought that I could never know
 A sadder day than that ; but what was that,
 Compared with this day's sorrow ?

GREGORY.

I remember,
 Eight months ago, when the young Squire began
 To alter the old mansion—they destroy'd
 The martins' nests, that had stood undisturb'd
 Under that roof—ay, long before my memory !
 I shook my head at seeing it, and thought
 No good could follow.

JAMES.

Poor young man ! I loved him
 Like my own child. I loved the family :
 Come Candlemas, and I have been their servant
 For five-and-forty years. I lived with them
 When his good father brought my lady home ;
 And when the young squire was born, it did me good
 To hear the bells so merrily announce
 An heir. This is indeed a heavy blow :
 I feel it, Gregory, heavier than the weight
 Of threescore years. He was a noble lad—
 I loved him dearly !

GREGORY.

Every body loved him—
 Such a fine, generous, open-hearted youth !
 When he came home from school at holidays,
 How I rejoiced to see him ! He was sure
 To come and ask of me what birds there were

About my fields ; and when I found a covey,
 There's not a testy squire preserves his game
 More charily, than I have kept them safe
 For Master Edward. And he look'd so well
 Upon a fine sharp morning after them,
 His brown hair frosted, and his cheek so flush'd,
 With such a wholesome ruddiness ;—ah, James !
 But he was sadly changed when he came down
 To keep his birth-day.

JAMES.

Changed ! why, Gregory,
 'Twas like a palsy to me, when he stepp'd
 Out of the carriage. He was grown so thin,
 His cheek so delicate sallow, and his eyes
 Had such a dim and rakish hollowness ;
 And when he came to shake me by the hand,
 And spoke as kindly to me as he used,
 I hardly knew the voice.

GREGORY.

It struck a damp
 On all our merriment. 'Twas a noble ox
 That smok'd before us, and the old October
 Went merrily in overflowing cans ;
 But 'twas a skin-deep merriment. My heart
 Seem'd as it took no share. And when we drank
 His health, the thought came over me what cause
 We had for wishing that, and spoilt the draught.
 Poor Gentleman ! to think ten months ago
 He came of age, and now !

JAMES.

I fear'd it then—
 He look'd to me as one that was not long
 For this world's business.

GREGORY.

When the Doctor sent him
 -Abroad to try the air, it made me certain
 That all was over. There's but little hope
 Methinks that foreign parts can help a man
 When his own mother-country will not do.
 The last time he came down, these bells rung so
 I thought they would have rock'd the old steeple down;
 And now that dismal toll! I would have staid
 Beyond its reach, but this was a last duty:
 I am an old tenant of the family,
 Born on the estate, and now that I have outlived it—
 Why, 'tis but right to see it to the grave.
 Have you heard aught of the new squire?

JAMES.

But little,
 And that not well. But be he what he may,
 Matters not much to me. The love I bore
 To the good family will not easily fix
 Upon a stranger. What's on the opposite hill?
 Is it not the funeral?

GREGORY.

'Tis, I think, some horsemen.
 Ay! there are the black cloaks; and now I see
 The white plumes on the hearse.

JAMES.

Between the trees;
 'Tis hid behind them now.

GREGORY.

Ay! now we see it;
 And there's the coaches following, we shall meet

About the bridge. Would that this day were over!
I wonder whose turn's next!

JAMES.

God above knows!
When youth is summon'd what must age expect?
God make us ready, Gregory, when it comes!

THE WEDDING.

TRAVELLER.

I PRAY you, wherefore are the village bells
Ringing so merrily?

WOMAN.

A wedding, sir—
Two of the village folk. And they are right
To make a merry time on't while they may.
Come twelve months hence, I warrant them they'd go
To church again more willingly than now,
So all might be undone.

TRAVELLER.

An ill-match'd pair,
So I conceive you. Youth, perhaps, and age?

WOMAN.

No—both are young enough.

TRAVELLER.

Perhaps the man, then,
A lazy idler, one who better likes
The alehouse than his work?

WOMAN.

Why, sir, for that
 He always was a well-conditioned lad,
 One who'd work hard and well ; and as for drink,
 Save now and then mayhap at Christmas time,
 Sober as wife could wish.

TRAVELLER.

Then is the girl
 A shrew, or else untidy. One who'd welcome
 Her husband with a rude unruly tongue,
 Or drive him from a foul and wretched home
 To look elsewhere for comfort. Is it so ?

WOMAN.

She's notable enough, and as for temper
 The best good-humour'd girl ! d'ye see that house ?
 There by the aspin tree whose gray leaves shine
 In the wind ? she lived a servant at the farm,
 And often as I came to weeding here,
 I've heard her singing as she milk'd her cows
 So cheerfully,—I did not like to hear her,
 Because it made me think upon the days
 When I had got as little on my mind,
 And was as cheerful too. But she would marry,
 And folks must reap as they have sown. God help her !

TRAVELLER

Why, Mistress, if they both are well inclined,
 Why should not both be happy ?

WOMAN.

They've no money.

TRAVELLER.

But both can work, and sure as cheerfully

She'd labour for herself as at the farm.
 And he won't work the worse because he knows
 That she will make his fireside ready for him,
 And watch for his return.

WOMAN.

All very well,
 A little while.

TRAVELLER.

And what if they are poor?
 Riches ca'n't always purchase happiness,
 And much we know will be expected there
 Where much was given.

WOMAN.

All this I have heard at church!
 And when I walk in the churchyard, or have been
 By a death-bed, 'tis mighty comforting.
 But when I hear my children ery for hunger
 And see them shiver in their rags,—God help me!
 I pity those for whom these bells ring up
 So merrily upon their wedding day,
 Because I think of mine.

TRAVELLER.

You have known trouble.
 These, haply, may be happier.

WOMAN.

Why, for that
 I've had my share; some sickness and some sorrow,
 Well will it be for them to know no worse.
 Yet had I rather hear a daughter's knell,
 Than her wedding peal, sir, if I thought her fate
 Promised no better things.

TRAVELLER.

Sure, sure, good Woman, •
 You look upon the world with jaundiced eyes !
 All have their cares ; those who are poor want wealth,
 Those who have wealth want more, so are we all
 Dissatisfied, yet all live on, and each
 Has his own comforts.

WOMAN.

Sir ! dy'e see that horse
 Turn'd out to common here by the wayside ?
 He's high in bone, you may tell every rib
 Even at this distance. Mind him ! how he turns
 His head, to drive away the flies that feed
 On his gall'd shoulder ! there's just grass enough
 To disappoint his whett'd appetite.
 You see his *comforts*, sir !

TRAVELLER.

A wretch'd beast !
 Hard labour and worse usage he endures
 From some bad master. But the lot of the poor
 Is not like his.

WOMAN.

In truth it is not, sir !
 For when the horse lies down at night, no cares
 About to-morrow vex him in his dreams ;
 He knows no quarter-day, and when he gets
 Some musty hay or patch of hedge-row grass,
 He has no hungry children to claim part
 Of his half meal !

TRAVELLER.

'Tis idleness makes want,
 And idle habits. If the man will go
 And spend his evenings by the ale-house fire,
 Whom can he blame if there is want at home ?

WOMAN.

Ay ! idleness ! the rich folks never fail
 To find some reason why the poor deserve
 Their miseries ! is it idleness, I pray you,
 That brings the fever or the ague fit ?
 That makes the sick one's sickly appetite
 Turn at the dry bread and potato meal ?
 Is it idleness that makes small wages fail
 For growing wants ? six years ago, these bells
 Rung on my wedding day, and I was told
 What I might look for,—but I did not heed
 Good counsel. I had lived in service, sir,
 Knew never what it was to want a meal ;
 Lay down without one thought to keep me sleepless
 Or trouble me in sleep ; had for a Sunday
 My linen gown, and when the pedlar came
 Could buy me a new ribbon,—and my husband,—
 A towardly young man and well to do,
 He had his silver buckles and his watch,
 There was not in the village one who look'd
 Sprucer on holydays. We married, sir,
 And we had children, but as wants increased
 Wages did not. The silver buckles went,
 So went the watch, and when the holyday coat
 Was worn to work, no new one in its place.*
 For me—you see my rags ! but I deserve them,
 For wilfully, like this new-married pair,
 I went to my undoing.

* A farmer once told the Author of "Malvern Hills,"
 "that he almost constantly remarked a gradation of changes
 in those men he had been in the habit of employing. Young
 men, he said, were generally neat in their appearance, active,
 and cheerful, till they became married and had a family, when
 he had observed that their silver buttons, buckles, and watches
 gradually disappeared, and their Sunday's clothes became com-
 mon, without any other to supply their place,—'but,' said he,
 'some good comes from this, for they will then work for whatever
 they can get.'"—NOTE TO COTTLE'S "MALVERN HILLS."

TRAVELLER.

But the parish—

WOMAN.

Ay, it falls heavy there, and yet their pittance
Just serves to keep life in. A blessed prospect,
To slave while there is strength ; in age,—the work-
house ;
A parish shell at last, and the little bell
Toll'd hastily for a pauper's funeral !

TRAVELLER.

Is this your child ?

WOMAN.

Ay, sir, and were he drest
And clean, he'd be as fine a boy to look on
As the Squire's young master. These thin rags of his
Let comfortably in the summer wind ;
But when the winter comes, it pinches me
To see the little wretch ! I've three besides,
And—God forgive me ! but I often wish
To see them in their coffins. God reward you !
God bless you for your charity !

* TRAVELLER.

You have taught me
To give sad meaning to the village bells !

BOTANY BAY ECLOGUES.

Where a sight shall shuddering sorrow find
Sad as the ruins of the human mind!

BOWLES.

ELINOR.

Time. —Morning. Scene,—the Shore.*

ONCE more to daily toil, once more to wear
The livery of shame, once more to search
With miserable task this savage shore!
Oh thou, who mountest so triumphantly
In yonder heaven, beginning thy career
Of glory, Oh thou blessed Sun! thy beams
Fall on me with the same benignant light,
Here, at the furthest limits of the world,*
And blasted as I am with infamy,
As when in better years poor Elinor
Gazed on thy glad uprise with eye undimmed
By guilt and sorrow, and the opening morn
Woke her from quiet sleep to days of peace.

* The female convicts are frequently employed in collecting shells, for the purpose of making lime.

In other occupation, then I trod
The beach at eve; and then, when I beheld
The billows, as they rolled before the storm,
Burst on the rock and rage, my timid soul
Shrunk at the perils of the boundless deep,
And heaved a sigh for suffering mariners.
Ah! little thinking I myself was doomed
To tempt the perils of the boundless deep,
An outcast, unbeloved and unbewailed.

Still wilt thou haunt me, memory! still present
The fields of England to my exiled eyes,
The joys which once were mine! Even now I see
The lowly lovely dwelling! Even now
Behold the woodbine clasping its white walls,
Where fearlessly the redbreasts chirp around
To ask their morning meal; and where at eve
I loved to sit and watch the rook sail by,
And hear his hollow croak, what time he sought
The church-yard elm, that with its ancient boughs
Full foliated, half-concealed the house of God:
That holy house, where I so oft have heard
My father's voice explain the wondrous works
Of Heaven to sinful man. Ah! little deemed
His virtuous bosom that his shameless child
So soon should spurn the lesson! sink, the slave
Of vice and infamy! the hireling prey
Of brutal appetite! At length, worn out
With famine, and the avenging scourge of guilt,
Should dare dishonesty—yet dread to die!

Welcome, ye savage lands, ye barbarous climes,
Where angry England sends her outcast sons,
I hail your joyless shores! My weary bark,
Long tempest-tost on life's inclement sea,
Here hails her haven! welcomes the drear scene,
The marshy plain, the briar-entangled wood,

And all the perils of a world unknown,—
 For Elinor has nothing new to fear
 From fickle fortune ! All her rankling shafts,
 Barbed with disgrace, and venom'd with disease,
 Have pierced my bosom, and the dart of death
 Has lost its terrors to a wretch like me.

Welcome, ye marshy heaths ! ye pathless woods,
 Where the rude native rests his wearied frame,
 Beneath the sheltering shade ; where, when the storm,
 As rough and bleak it rolls along the sky,
 Benumbs his naked limbs, he flies to seek
 The dripping shelter. Welcome, ye wild plains
 Unbroken by the plough, undelved by hand
 Of patient rustic ; where, for lowing herds,
 And for the music of the bleating flocks,
 Alone is heard the kangaroo's sad note
 Deepening in distance. Welcome, ye rude climes,
 The realm of Nature ! For—as yet unknown
 The crimes and comforts of luxurious life—
 Nature benignly gives to all enough,
 Denies to all a superfluity.
 What though the garb of infamy I wear,
 Though day by day along the echoing beach
 I cull the wave-worn shells ; yet day by day
 I earn in honesty my frugal food,
 And lay me down at night to calm repose,
 No more condemned the mercenary tool
 Of brutal lust, while heaves the indignant heart
 With virtue's stifled sigh, to fold my arms
 Round the rank felon, and for daily bread
 To hug contagion to my poisoned breast ;
 On these wild shores repentance' saviour hand
 Shall probe my secret soul ; shall cleanse its wounds,
 And fit the faithful penitent for heaven.

HUMPHREY AND WILLIAM.

Time,—Noon.

HUMPHREY.

SEE'ST thou not, William, that the scorching sun
By this time half his daily race has run ?
The savage thrusts his light canoe to shore,
And hurries homeward with his fishy store.
Suppose we leave awhile this stubborn soil,
To eat our dinner and to rest from toil.

WILLIAM.

Agreed. Yon tree, whose purple gum bestows
A ready medicine for the sick man's woes,
Forms with its shadowy boughs a cool retreat
To shield us from the noontide's sultry heat.
Ah, Humphrey ! now, upon old England's shore,
The weary labourer's morning work is o'er :
The woodman now rests from his measured stroke,
Flings down his axe, and sits beneath the oak.
Savoured with hunger, there he eats his food,
There drinks the cooling streamlet of the wood.
To us no cooling streamlet wends its way,
No joys domestic crown for us the day.
The felon's name, the outcast's garb we wear,
Toil all the day, and all the night despair.

HUMPHREY.

Ah, William ! labouring up the furrowed ground,
I used to love the village clock's dull sound,
Rejoice to hear my morning toil was done,
And trudge it homewards when the clock went one.
'Twas ere I turned a soldier and a sinner !
Pshaw ! curse this whining—let us fall to dinner.

WILLIAM.

I, too, have loved this hour, nor yet forgot
 Each joy domestic of my little cot.
 For at this hour my wife, with watchful care,
 Was wont each humbler dainty to prepare ;
 The keenest sauce by hunger was supplied,
 And my poor children prattled at my side.
 Methinks I see the old oak table spread,
 The clean white trencher and the good brown bread,
 The cheese my daily food which Mary made,
 For Mary knew full well the housewife's trade :
 The jug of cyder—cyder I could make—
 And then the knives—I won 'em at the wake.
 Another has them now ! I, toiling here,
 Look backward like a child, and drop a tear.

HUMPHREY.

I love a dismal story : tell me thine.
 Meantime, good Will, I'll listen as I dine.
 I, too, my friend, can tell a piteous story—
 When I turned hero how I purchased glory.

WILLIAM.

But, Humphrey, sure thou never canst have known
 The comforts of a little home thine own :
 A home so snug, so cheerful, too, as mine ;
 'Twas always clean, and we could make it fine ;
 For there King Charles' golden rules were seen,
 And there—God bless 'em both—the king and queen.
 The pewter plates, our garnished chimney's grace,
 So nicely scoured, you might have seen your face ;
 And over all, to frighten thieves, was hung,
 Well cleaned although but seldom used, my gun.
 Ah ! that damned gun ! I took it down one morn—
 A desperate deal of harm they did my corn !
 Our testy squire too loved to save the breed,
 So covey upon covey ate my seed.

I marked the mischievous rogues, and took my aim ;
 I fired, they fell, and—up the keeper came.
 That cursed morning brought on my undoing ;
 I went to prison, and my farm to ruin.
 Poor Mary ! for her grave the parish paid,
 No tombstone tells where her cold corpse is laid !
 My children—my dear boys—

HUMPHREY.

Come—grief is dry.
 You to your dinner—to my story I.
 To you, my friend, who happier days have known,
 And each calm comfort of a home your own,
 This is bad living : I have spent my life
 In hardest toil and unavailing strife,
 And here (from forest ambush safe at least)
 To me this scanty pittance seems a feast.
 I was a plough-boy once ; as free from woes
 And blithesome as the lark, with whom I rose.
 Each evening at return a meal I found ;
 And, though my bed was hard, my sleep was sound.
 One Whitsuntide, to go to fair, I drest,
 Like a great bumpkin, in my Sunday's best ;
 A primrose posey in my hat I stuck,
 And to the revel went to try my luck.
 From show to show, from booth to booth I stray,
 See, stare and wonder, all the livelong day.
 A sergeant to the fair recruiting came,
 Skilled in man-catching, to beat up for game ;
 Our booth he entered, and sat down by me,—
 Methinks, even now, the very scene I see !
 The canvas roof, the hogshead's running store,
 The old blind fiddler, seated next the door ;
 The frothy tankard, passing to and fro,
 And the rude rabble round the puppet-show.
 The Sergeant eyed me well—the punch-bowl comes,
 And as we laughed and drank, up struck the drums.

And now he gives a bumper to his wench,
 God save the king, and then—God damn the French!
 Then tells the story of his last campaign,
 How many wounded and how many slain,
 Flags flying, cannons roaring, drums a-beating,
 The English marching on, the French retreating,—
 “Push on—push on, my lads! they fly before ye,
 March on to riches, happiness and glory!”
 At first I wondered, by degrees grow bolder,
 Then cried—“’Tis a fine thing to be a soldier!”
 “Ay, Humphrey!” says the serjeant—“that’s your
 name?”

’Tis a fine thing to fight the French for fame!
 March to the field—knock out a mounseer’s brains,
 And pick the scoundrel’s pocket for your pains.
 Come, Humphrey, come, thou art a lad of spirit;
 Rise to a halbert—as I did—by merit!
 Wouldst thou believe it? even I was once
 As thou art now, a plough-boy and a dunce;
 But courage raised me to my rank. How now; boy!
 Shall hero Humphrey still be Numps the plough-boy?
 A proper-shaped young fellow! tall and straight!
 Why, thou wert made for glory!—five feet eight!
 The road to riches is the field of fight,—
 Didst ever see a guinea look so bright?
 Why, regimentals, Numps, would give thee grace,
 A hat and feather would become that face;
 The girls would crowd around thee to be kist—
 Dost love a girl!” “Od zounds!” I cried, “I’ll list!”
 So passed the night: anon the morning came,
 And off I set a volunteer for fame.
 “Back shoulders, turn out your toes, hold up your
 head,
 Stand easy!” so I did—till almost dead.
 O how I longed to tend the plough again,
 Trudge up the field and whistle o’er the plain,
 When tired and sore amid the piteous throng

Hungry and cold and wet I limped along,
 And growing fainter as I passed and colder,
 Cursed that ill hour when I became a soldier !
 In town I found the hours more gaily pass,
 And time fled swiftly with my girl and glass ;
 The girls were wondrous kind and wondrous fair,
 They soon transferred me to the doctor's care ;
 The doctor undertook to cure the evil,
 And he almost transferred me to the devil.
 'Twere tedious to relate the dismal story
 Of fighting, fasting, wretchedness, and glory.
 At last discharged, to England's shores I came,
 Paid for my wounds with want, instead of fame ;
 Found my fair friends, and plundered as they bade me,
 They kissed me, coaxed me, robbed me, and betrayed
 me.
 Tried and condemned, his majesty transports me,
 And here in peace, I thank him, he supports me.
 So ends my dismal and heroic story,
 And Humphrey gets more good from guilt than glory.

JOHN, SAMUEL, AND RICHARD.

Time,-- Evening.

JOHN.

'Tis a calm pleasant evening, the light fades away,
 And the sun going down has done watch for the day.
 To my mind, we live wondrous well when transported ;
 It is but to work, and we must be supported.
 Fill the can, Dick ! Success here to Botany Bay !

RICHARD.

Success if you will,—but God send me away !

JOHN.

You lubberly landsmen don't know when you're well
 Hadst thou known half the hardships of which I can
 tell !

The sailor has no place of safety in store—
 From the tempest at sea, to the press-gang on shore !
 When roguery rules all the rest of the earth,
 God be thanked, in this corner I've got a good berth.

SAMUEL.

Talk of hardships ! what these are, the sailor don't
 know ;
 'Tis the soldier, my friend, that's acquainted with woe,
 Long journeys, short halting, hard work, and small
 pay,
 To be popt at, like pigeons, for sixpence a day.
 Thank God ! I'm safe quartered at Botany Bay

JOHN.

Ah ! you know but little : I'll wager a pot
 I have suffered more evils than fell to your lot.
 Come, we'll have it all fairly and properly tried,
 Tell story for story, and Dick shall decide.

SAMUEL.

Done !

JOHN.

Done ! 'Tis a wager, and I shall be winner ;
 Thou wilt go without grog, Sam, to-morrow, at dinner.

SAMUEL.

I was trapped by the Sergeant's palavering pretences,
 He 'listed me when I was out of my senses.
 So I took leave to-day of all care and all sorrow,
 And was drilled to repentance and reason to-morrow.

JOHN.

I would be a sailor and plough the wide ocean,
 But was soon sick and sad with the billows' com-
 motion ;
 So the captain he sent me aloft on the mast,
 And cursed me, and bid me cry there—and hold fast !

SAMUEL.

After marching all day, faint, and hungry, and sore,
 I have lain down at night on the swamps of the moor,
 Unsheltered, and forced by fatigue to remain,
 All chilled by the wind and benumbed by the rain.

JOHN.

I have rode out the storm when the billows beat high,
 And the red gleaming lightnings flashed through the
 dark sky ;
 When the tempest of night the black sea overcast,
 Wet and weary I laboured, yet sung to the blast.

SAMUEL.

I have marched, trumpets sounding, drums beating,
 flags flying,
 Where the music of war drowned the shrieks of the
 dying,
 When the shots whizzed around me all dangers defied,
 Pushed on when my comrades fell dead at my side ;
 Drove the foe from the mouth of the cannon away,
 Fought, conquered, and bled, all for sixpence a-day.

JOHN.

And I, too, friend. Samuel ! have heard the shots
 rattle,
 But we seamen rejoice in the play of the battle ;
 Though the chain and the grape-shot roll splintering
 around,
 With the blood of our messmates though slippery the
 ground,

The fiercer the fight, still the fiercer we grow,
 We heed not our loss so we conquer the foe ;
 And the hard battle won, if the prize be not sunk,
 The captain gets rich, and the sailors get drunk.

SAMUEL.

God help the poor soldier when backward he goes
 In disgraceful retreat through a country of foes !
 No respite from danger by day or by night,
 He is still forced to fly, still o'ertaken to fight ;
 Every step that he takes he must battle his way,
 He must force his hard meal from the peasant away :
 No rest, and no hope, from all succour afar,
 God forgive the poor soldier for going to the war !

JOHN.

But what are these dangers to those I have past
 When the dark billows roared to the roar of the blast ;
 When we worked at the pumps, worn with labour and
 weak,
 And with dread still beheld the increase of the leak ?
 Sometimes, as we rose on the wave, could our sight
 From the rocks of the shore catch the light-house's
 light ;
 In vain to the beach to assist us they press,
 We fire faster and faster our guns of distress ;
 Still, with rage-unabating, the wind and waves roar ;
 How the giddy wreck reels, as the billows burst o'er !
 Leap—leap—for she yawns—for she sinks in the
 wave !
 Call on God to preserve—for God only can save.

SAMUEL.

There's an end of all troubles, however, at last !
 And when I in the wagon of wounded was cast,
 When my wounds with the chilly night-wind smarted
 sore,
 And I thought of the friends I should never see more,

No hand to relieve—scarce a morsel of bread—
 Sick at heart, I have envied the peace of the dead !
 Left to rot in a jail till by treaty set free,
 Old England's white cliffs with what joy did I see !
 I had gained enough glory, some wounds, but no good.
 And was turned on the public to shift how I could.
 When I think what I've suffered, and where I am now,
 I curse him who snared me away from the plough.

JOHN.

When I was discharged, I went home to my wife.
 There in comfort to spend all the rest of my life.
 My wife was industrious, we earned what we spent,
 And though little we had, were with little content :
 And whenever I listened, and heard the wind roar,
 I blessed God for my little snug cabin on shore.
 At midnight they seized me, they dragged me away,
 They wounded me sore when I would not obey,
 And because for my country I'd ventured my life,
 I was dragged, like a thief from my home and my wife.
 Then the fair wind of fortune chopped round in my
 face,
 And want at length drove me to guilt and disgrace—
 But all's for the best : on the world's wide sea cast.
 I am havened in peace in this corner at last.

SAMUEL.

Come, Dick ! we have done—and for judgment we
 call.

RICHARD.

And in faith I can give you no judgment at all !
 But that as you're now settled, and safe from foul
 weather,
 You drink up your grog, and be merry together.

FREDERIC.

Time,—Night. Scene,—the Woods.

WHERE shall I turn me ? whither shall I bend
 My weary way ? thus worn with toil and faint,
 How through the thorny mazes of this wood
 Attain my distant dwelling ? That deep cry,
 That rings along the forest, seems to sound
 My parting knell : it is the midnight howl
 Of hungry monsters, prowling for their prey !
 Again ! O, save me—save me, gracious Heaven !
 I am not fit to die.

Thou coward wretch,
 Why heaves thy trembling heart ? why shake thy
 limbs
 Beneath their palsied burden ? Is there aught
 So lovely in existence ? Wouldst thou drain
 Even to its dregs the bitter draught of life ?
 Stamped with the brand of vice and infamy,
 Why should the villain Frederic shrink from death ?

Death ! Where the magic in that empty name
 That chills my inmost heart ? Why at the thought
 Starts the cold dew of fear on every limb ?
 There are no terrors to surround the grave,
 When the calm mind, collected in itself,
 Surveys that narrow house : the ghastly train
 That haunt the midnight of delirious guilt
 Then vanish. In that home of endless rest
 All sorrows cease.—Would I might slumber there

Why, then, this panting of the fearful heart !
 This miser love of life, that dreads to lose
 Its cherished torment ? Shall the diseased man,

Yield up his members to the surgeon's knife,
 Doubtful of succour, but to ease his frame
 Of fleshly anguish ; and the coward wretch,
 Whose ulcerated soul can know no help,
 Shrink from the best Physician's certain aid ?
 Oh, it were better far to lay me down
 Here on this cold damp earth, till some wild beast
 Seize on his willing victim !

I to die

Were all, it were most sweet to rest my head
 On the cold clod, and sleep the sleep of death.
 But if the archangel's trump at the last hour
 Startle the ear of death, and wake the soul
 To frenzy !—dreams of infancy : fit tales
 For garrulous beldames to affrighten babes !
 What if I warred upon the world ? the world
 Had wronged me first : I had endured the ills
 Of hard injustice ; all this goodly earth
 Was but to me one wild waste wilderness ;
 I had no share in nature's patrimony,
 Blasted were all my morning hopes of youth,
 Dark disappointment followed on my ways,
 Care was my bosom inmate, and keen want
 Gnawed at my heart. Eternal One, Thou knowest
 How that poor heart, even in the bitter hour
 Of lewdest revelry, has inly yearned
 For peace !

My Father ! I will call on Thee,
 Pour to Thy mercy-seat my earnest prayer,
 And wait Thy righteous will, resigned of soul.
 Oh, thoughts of comfort ! how the afflicted heart,
 Tired with the tempest of its passions, rests
 On you with holy hope ! The hollow howl
 Of yonder harmless tenant of the woods
 Bursts not with terror on the sobered sense.
 If I have sinned against mankind, on them
 Be that past sin—they made me what I was.

In these extremest climes can want no more
Urge to the deeds of darkness, and at length
Here shall I rest. What though my hut be poor—
The rains descend not through its humble roof :
Would I were there again ! The night is cold ;
And what if in wanderings I should rouse
The savage from his thicket !

Hark ! the gun !

And lo, the fire of safety ! I shall reach
My little hut again ! Again, by toil,
Force from the stubborn earth my sustenance,
And quick-eared guilt will never start alarmed
Amid the well-earned meal. This felon's garb—
Will it not shield me from the winds of heaven ?
And what could purple more ? Oh, strengthen me,
Eternal One, in this serener state !
Cleanse Thou mine heart, so penitence and faith
Shall heal my soul, and my last days be peace.

SONGS OF THE INDIAN WARRIORS.

THE HURON'S ADDRESS TO THE DEAD.

BROTHER, thou wert strong in youth !
Brother, thou wert brave in war !
Unhappy man was he
For whom thou hadst sharpened the tomahawk's edge ;
Unhappy man was he
On whom thine angry eye was fixed in fight ;
And he from whom thy hand
Received the calumet,
Blest heaven, and slept in peace.

When the Evil Spirits seized thee,
Brother, we were sad at heart :
We bade the Jongler come
And bring his magic aid ;
We circled thee in mystic dance,
With songs and shouts and cries,
To free thee from their power.
Brother, but in vain we strove,
The number of thy days was full.

Thou sittest amongst us on thy mat ;
The bear-skin from thy shoulder hangs,
Thy feet are sandal'd, ready for the way.
Those are the unfatiguable feet
That travers'd the forest tract ;
Those are the lips that late
Thundered the yell of war ;

And that is the strong right arm
That never was lifted in vain.

Those lips are silent now ;
The limbs that were active are stiff,
Loose hangs that strong right arm !

And where is that which in thy voice
The language of friendship spake ?
That gave the strength of thine arm,—
That fill'd thy limbs with life ?
It was not thou, for thou art here,
Thou art amongst us still ;
But the life and the feeling are gone.
The Iroquois will learn
That thou hast ceas'd from war ;
'Twill be a joy like victory,
For thou wert the scourge of their race.

Brother, we sing thee the song of death ;
In thy coffin of bark we lay thee to rest ;
The bow shall be placed by thy side,
And the shafts that are pointed and feathered for
flight.

To the Country of the Dead
Long and painful is thy way !
Over rivers wide and deep
Lies the road that must be past,
By bridges narrow-wall'd,
Where scarce the Soul can force its way,
While the loose fabric totters under it.

Safely may our Brother pass !
Safely may he reach the fields
Where the sound of the drum and the shell
Shall be heard from the Country of Souls !
The Spirits of thy Sires
Shall come to welcome thee .

The God of the dead, in his bower,
 Shall receive thee and bid thee join
 The dance of eternal joy.

Brother, we pay thee the rites of death.
 Rest in the bower of delight !

THE PERUVIAN'S DIRGE,

OVER THE BODY OF HIS FATHER.

REST in peace, my Father, rest,
 With danger and toil have I borne thy corpse
 From the stranger's field of death.
 I bless thee, O Wife of the Sun,
 For veiling thy beams with a cloud,
 While at the pious task
 Thy votary toil'd in fear.
 Thou badest the clouds of night
 Enwrap thee, and hide thee from man ;
 But didst thou not see my toil,
 And put on the darkness to aid,
 O Wife of the visible God ?

Wretched, my Father, thy life !
 Wretched the life of the Slave !
 All day for another he toils,
 Overwearied at night he lies down,
 And dreams of the freedom that once he enjoy'd.

Thou wert blest in the days of thy youth,
 My Father. for then thou wert free.

In the fields of the nation thy hand
 Bore its part of the general task ;
 And when, with the song and the dance,
 Ye brought the harvest home,
 As all in the labour had shared,
 So justly they shar'd in the fruits.

Thou visible Lord of the Earth,
 Thou God of my Fathers, thou God of my heart,
 O Giver of light, and of life !
 When the Strangers came to our shores,
 Why didst thou not put forth thy power ?
 Thy thunders should then have been hurl'd,
 Thy fires should in lightnings have flash'd !
 Visible God of the Earth, •
 The strangers mock at thy might !
 To figures and beams of wood
 They force us to bow the knee ;
 They plunge us in caverns and dens
 Where never thy blessed light
 Shines on our poisonous toil !
 But not in the caverns and dens,
 O Sun, we are mindless of thee !
 We pine for the want of thy beams,
 We adore thee with anguish and groans.

My Father, rest in peace !
 Rest with the dust of thy Sires !
 They placed their Cross in thy dying grasp,—
 They bore thee to their burial place,
 And over thy breathless frame
 Their bloody and merciless Priest,
 Mumbled his mystery words. \
 Oh ! could thy bones be at peace
 In the fields where the strangers are laid ?—
 Alone, in danger and in pain,
 My Father, I bring thee here :

So may our God, in reward,
Allow me one faithful friend
To lay me beside thee when I am released !
So may he release me soon,
That my Spirit may join thee there,
Where the Strangers never shall come !

SONG OF THE ARAUCANS,

DURING A THUNDER STORM.

THE storm cloud grows deeper above ;
Araucans ! the tempest is ripe in the sky ;
Our forefathers come from their Islands of Bliss.
They come to the war of the winds.

The Souls of the Strangers are there,
In their garments of darkness they ride thro' the
heaven ;
The cloud that so lurid rolls over the hill,
Is red with their weapons of fire.

Hark ! hark ! in the howl of the wind
The shout of the battle, the clang of their drums,
The horsemen are met, and the shock of the fight
Is the blast that disbranches the wood.

Behold from the clouds of their power
The lightning—the lightning is lanced at our sires ;
And the thunder that shakes the broad pavement of
heaven !
And the darkness that quenches the day !

Ye souls of our Fathers be brave !
Ye shrunk not before the invaders on earth,
Ye trembled not then at their weapons of fire,
Brave Spirits, ye tremble not now !

We gaze on your warfare in hope,
We send up our shouts to encourage your arms !
Lift the lance of your vengeance, O Fathers ! with
force,
For the wrongs of your country strike home !

Remember the land was your own,
When the Sons of Destruction came over the seas ;
That the old fell asleep in the fulness of days,
And their children wept over their graves.

Till the Strangers came into the land,
With tongues of deceit and with weapons of fire,
Then the strength of the people in youth was cut off,
And the father wept over his son.

It thickens—the tumult of fight,
Louder and louder the blast of the battle is heard :
Remember the wrongs that your country endures !
Remember the fields of your fame !

Joy ; joy ! for the Strangers recoil,—
They give way,—they retreat to the land of their life.
Pursue them ! pursue them ! remember your wrongs !
Let your lances be drunk with their wounds.

The Souls of your wives shall rejoice,
As they welcome you back to your Islands of Bliss ;
And the breeze that refreshes the toil-throbbing brow
Waft thither the song of your praise.

SONG OF THE CHIKKASAH WIDOW.

'Twas the voice of my husband that came on the
gale.

The unappeas'd Spirit in anger complains.

Rest, rest, Ollanahta, be still !

The day of revenge is at hand.

The stake is made ready, the captives shall die ;

To-morrow the song of their death shalt thou hear,

To-morrow thy widow shall wield

the knife and the fire.—Be at rest !

The vengeance of anguish shall soon have its course :

The fountains of grief and of fury shall flow :

I will think, Ollanahta ! of thee,—

Will remember the days of our love.

Ollanahta, all day by thy war-pole I sat,

Where idly thy hatchet of battle is hung ;

I gazed on the bow of thy strength

As it waved on the stream of the wind.

The scalps that we number'd in triumph were there,

And the musket that never was levell'd in vain,

What a leap has it given to my heart

To see thee suspend it in peace.

When the black and blood-banner was spread to the
gale, '—

When thrice the deep voice of the war-drum was heard,

I remember thy terrible eyes,

How they flashed the dark glance of thy joy.

I remember the hope that shone over thy cheek,
As thy hand from the pole reach'd its doers of death ;
 Like the ominous gleam of the cloud
 Ere the thunder and lightning are born.

He went, and ye came not to warn him in dreams,
Kindred Spirits of Him who is holy and great !
 And where was thy warning, O Bird,
 The untimely announcer of ill ?

Alas ! when thy brethren in conquest return'd ;
When I saw the white plumes bending over their
 heads,
 And the pine-boughs of triumph before
 Where the scalps of their victory swung,—

The war-hymn they pour'd, and thy voice was not
 there.
I call'd thee,—alas ! the white deer-skin was brought,
 And thy grave was prepared in the tent
 • Which I had made ready for joy !

Ollanahta, all day by the war-pole I sit—
Ollanahta, all night I weep over thy grave ;
 To-morrow the victims shall die,
 And I shall have joy in revenge !

• THE OLD CHIKKASAH TO HIS GRANDSON.

Now go to the battle, my Boy !
 Dear child of my son,
 There is strength in thine arm,
 There is hope in thy heart,
 Thou art ripe for the labours of war.
 Thy Sire was a stripling, like thee
 When he went to the first of his fields.
 He return'd,—in the glory of conquest return'd,
 Before him his trophies were borne.
 These scalps that have hung till the sun and the rain
 Have rusted their raven locks.
 Here he stood when the morn of rejoicing arriv'd,
 The day of the warriors' reward ;
 When the banners sun-beaming were spread,
 And all hearts were dancing in joy
 To the sound of the victory drum.

The Heroes were met to receive their reward ;
 But distinguish'd among the young Heroes that day,
 The pride of his nation, thy Father was seen :
 The swan feathers hung from his neck,
 His face like the rainbow was tinged,
 And his eye,—how it sparkled in pride !
 The Elders approach'd, and they placed on his brow
 The crown that his valour had won,
 And they gave him the old honoured name.
 They reported the deeds he had done in the war,
 And the youth of the nation were told
 To respect him, and tread in his path.

My Boy ! I have seen, and with hope,
The courage that rose in thine eye
When I told thee the tale of his death.
His war-pole now is gray with moss,
His tomahawk red with rust,
His bow-string, whose twang was death,
Now sings as it cuts the wind ;
But his memory is fresh in the land,
And his name with the names that we love.

Go now and revenge him, my Boy !
That his Spirit no longer may hover by day
O'er the hut where his bones are at rest,
Nor trouble our dreams in the night.
My Boy, I shall watch for the warriors' return.
And my soul will be sad
Till the steps of thy coming I see.

THE
LOVE ELEGIES OF ABEL SHUFFLEBOTTOM.

ELEGY I.

THE POET RELATES HOW HE OBTAINED DELIA'S
POCKET-HANDKERCHIEF.

'Tis mine ! what accents can my joy declare ?
Blest be the pressure of the thronging rout !
Blest be the hand so hasty of my fair,
That left the tempting corner hanging out.

I envy not the joy the pilgrim feels,
After long travel to some distant shrine,
When at the relic of his saint he kneels—
For Delia's pocket-handkerchief is mine.

When first with filching fingers I drew near,
Keen hope shot tremulous through every vein ;
And when the finish'd deed removed my fear,
Scarce could my bounding heart its joy contain.

What tho' the eighth commandment rose to mind,
It only served a moment's qualm to move ;
For thefts like this it could not be design'd—
The eight commandment was not made for love !

Here when she took the macaroons from me,
 She wiped her mouth to clean the crumbs so sweet ;
 Dear napkin ! yes, she wiped her lips in thee !
 Lips sweeter than the macaroons she eat.

And when she took that pinch of Macabaw,
 That made my love so delicately sneeze,
 Thee to her Roman nose applied, I saw,
 And thou art doubly dear for things like these.

No washerwoman's filthy hand shall e'er,
 Sweet pocket-handkerchief ! thy worth profane ;
 For thou hast touched the rubies of my fair.
 And I will kiss thee o'er and o'er again.

ELEGY II.

THE POET INVOKES THE SPIRITS OF THE ELEMENTS TO
 APPROACH DELIA.

HE DESCRIBES HER SINGING.

YE sylphs, who banquet on my Delia's blush—
 Who on her locks of floating gold repose—
 Dip in her cheek your gossamery brush,
 And with its bloom of beauty tinge the rose.

Hover around her lips on rainbow wing,
 Load from her honeyed breath your viewless feet,
 Bear thence a richer fragrance for the spring,
 And make the lily and the violet sweet.

Ye gnomes, whose toil thro' many a dateless year,
 Its nurture to the infant gem supplies,
 From central caverns bring your diamonds here,
 To ripen in the sun of Delia's eyes.

And ye who bathe in Etna's lava springs—
 Spirits of fire ! to see my love advance ;
 Fly, salamanders, on asbestos' wings !
 To wanton in my Delia's fiery glance.

She weeps, she weeps ! her eye with anguish swells,
 Some tale of sorrow melts my feeling girl !
 Nymphs, catch the tears ! and in your lucid shells
 Enclose them—embryos of the orient pearl.

She sings ! the nightingale with envy hears,
 The cherubim bends from his starry throne ;
 And motionless are stopt the attentive spheres—
 To hear more heavenly music than their own.

Cease, Delia, cease ! for all the angel throng,
 Listening to thee, let sleep their golden wires :
 Cease, Delia, cease ! that too surpassing song,
 Lest, stung to envy, they should break their lyres.

Cease, ere my senses are to madness driven
 By the strong joy ! Cease, Delia ! lest my soul,
 Enrapt, already think itself in heaven,
 And burst my feeble body's frail control.

ELEGY III.

THE POET EXPATIATES ON THE BEAUTY OF DELIA'S HAIR.

THE comb between whose ivory teeth she strains
The straitening curls of gold, so beamy bright,
Not spotless merely from the touch remains,
But issues forth more pure, more milky white.

The rose-pomatum that the Friseur spreads
Sometimes, with honour'd fingers, for my fair,
No added perfume on her tresses sheds,
But borrows sweetness from her sweeter hair.

Happy the Friseur who, in Delia's hair,
With licens'd fingers uncontroll'd may rove,
And happy in his death the dancing bear,
Who died to make pomatum for my love.

Oh, could I hope that e'er my favour'd lays
Might curl those lovely locks with conscious pride,
Nor Hammond, nor the Mantuan Shepherd's praise
I'd envy them, nor wish reward beside.

Cupid has strung from you, O tresses fine,
The bow that in my breast impelled his dart ;
From you, sweet locks ! he wove the subtle line
Wherewith the urchin angled for my heart.

Fine are my Delia's tresses as the threads
That from the silk-worm, self-interred, proceed ;
Fine as the gleamy gossamer, that spreads
Its filmy web-work o'er the tangled mead.

Yet with these tresses Cupid's power elate
 My captive heart has hand-cuffed in a chain,
 Strong as the cables of some huge first-rate,
 That bears Britannia's thunders o'er the main.

The Sylphs that round her radiant locks repair,
 In flowing lustre bathe their brightening wings;
 And Elphin Minstrels with assiduous care,
 The ringlets rob for Fairy fiddle-strings.

ELEGY IV.

THE POET RELATES HOW HE STOLE A LOCK OF DELIA'S
 HAIR, AND HER ANGER.

OH! be the day accurst that gave me birth!
 Ye seas, to swallow me, in kindness rise!
 Fall on me, mountains! and thou, merciful earth,
 Open, and hide me from my Delia's eyes!

Let universal Chaos now return,
 Now let the central fires their prison burst.
 And Earth and Heaven and Air and Ocean burn,
 For Delia frowns,—she frowns, and I am curst!

Oh! I could dare the fury of the fight
 Where hostile millions sought my single life;
 Would storm Volcano batteries with delight,
 And grapple with grim Death in glorious strife.

Oh! I could brave the bolts of angry Jove,
 When ceaseless lightnings fire the midnight skies;
 What is his wrath to that of her I love?
 What is his lightning, to my Delia's eyes?

Go, fatal lock ! I cast thee to the wind ;
 Ye serpent curls, ye poison-tendrils go ;
 Would I could tear thy memory from my mind,
 Accursed lock,—thou cause of all my woe !

Seize the curst curls, ye Furies, as they fly !
 Dæmons of darkness, guard the infernal roll,
 That thence your cruel vengeance when I die,
 May knit the knots of torture for my soul.

Last night,—Oh hear me, Heaven, and grant my
 prayer !
 The book of Fate before thy suppliant lay,
 And let me from its ample records tear
 Only the single page of yesterday !

Or let me meet old Time, upon his flight
 And I will stop him on his restless way ;
 Omnipotent in Love's resistless might,
 I'll force him back the road of yesterday.

Last night, as o'er the page of Love's despair,
 My Delia bent, deliciously to grieve ;
 I stood, a treacherous loiterer, by her chair,
 And drew the fatal scissors from my sleeve.

And would that at that instant, o'er my thread
 The shears of Atropos had open'd then ;
 And when I reft the lock from Delia's head,
 Had cut me, sudden, from the sons of men !

She heard the scissors that fair lock divide,
 And whilst my heart with transport panted big,
 She cast a fury frown on me, and cried,
 " You stupid puppy,—you have spoil'd my wig ! "

ANOMALIES.

SNUFF.

A DELICATE pinch! oh, how it tingles up
The titillated nose; and fills the eyes
And breast, till in one comfortable sneeze,
The full collected pleasure bursts at last!
Most rare Columbus! thou shalt be for this,
The only Christopher in my calendar.
Why, but for thee the uses of the nose
Were half unknown, and its capacity
Of joy. The summer gale that from the heath,
At midnight glittering with the golden furze,
Bears its balsamic odour, but provokes,
Not satisfies the sense; and all the flowers,
That with their unsubstantial fragrance tempt
And disappoint, bloom for so short a space,
That half the year the nostrils would keep Lent,
But that the kind tobacconist admits
No winter in his work; when Nature sleeps
His wheels roll on, and still administer
A plentitude of joy, a tangible smell.

What is Peru and these Golcondan mines,
To the Virginia? Miserable realms,
They furnish gold for knaves, and gems for fools;
But thine are common comforts! to omit
Pipe-panegyric and tobacco praise,
Think what the general joy the snuff-box gives,
Europe, and far above Pizarro's name

Write Raleigh in thy records of renown !
 Him, let the schoolboy bless, if he behold
 His master's box produced, for when he sees
 The thumb and finger of authority,
 Stuff up the nostrils ; when hat, head, and wig,
 Shake all ; when on the waistcoat black the dust
 Or drop falls brown ; soon shall the brow severe
 Relax, and from vituperative lips
 Words that of birch remind not, sounds of praise,
 And jokes that must be laugh'd at, shall proceed.

COOL REFLECTIONS

DURING A MIDSUMMER WALK.

O, SPARE me—spare me, Phœbus ! if, indeed,
 Thou hast not let another Phaeton
 Drive earthward thy fierce steeds and fiery car ;
 Mercy ! I melt ! I melt ! no tree, no bush,
 No shelter ! not a breath of stirring air,
 East, West, or North, or South ! Dear god of day,
 Put on thy night-cap ! crop thy locks of light,
 And be in the fashion ! turn thy back upon us,
 And let thy beams flow upward ; make it night
 Instead of noon ! one little miracle,
 In pity, gentle Phœbus !

What a joy,
 Oh, what a joy to be a seal, and flounder
 On an ice-island ! or to have a den.
 With the white bear, cavern'd in polar snow !
 It were a comfort to shake hands with Death.
 He has a rare cold hand ! to wrap one's self
 In the gift shirt Deianeira sent,

Dipt in the blood of Nessus, just to keep
 The sun off; or toast cheese for Beelzebub,
 That were a cool employment to this journey,
 Along a road whose white intensity
 Would now make platina uncongealable
 Like quicksilver.

Were it midnight, I should walk,
 Self-lanthorn'd, saturate with sun-beams. Jove!
 O, gentle Jove! have mercy, and once more,
 Kick that obdurate Phœbus out of heaven!
 Give Boreas the wind-cholic, till he roars
 For cardamum, and drinks down peppermint,
 Making what's left as precious as Tokay.
 Send Mercury to salivate the sky,
 Till it dissolves in rain. O, gentle Jove!
 But some such little kindness to a wretch,
 Who feels his marrow spoiling his best coat,
 Who swells with calorique, as if a Prester
 Had leavened every limb with poison-yeast;
 Lend me thine eagle just to flap his wings,
 And fan me, and I will build temples to thee.
 And turn true Pagan.

Not a cloud nor breeze,
 O, you most heathen Deities! if ever
 My bones reach home (for the flesh upon them,
 That hath resolved itself into a dew),
 I shall have learnt owl-wisdom. Thou vile Phœbus!
 Set me a Persian sun-idolator,
 Upon this turnpike road, and I'll convert him
 With no inquisitorial argument
 But thy own fires. Now woe be to me, wretch,
 That I was in a heretic country born!
 Else might some mass for the poor souls that bleach,
 And burn away the calx of their offences,
 In that great Purgatory crucible,
 Help me. O, Jupiter! my poor complexion!
 I am made a copper-Indian of already,

And if no kindly cloud will parasol me,
 My very cellular membrane will be changed,
 I shall be negrofied.

A brook ! a brook !

Oh, what a sweet cool sound !

'Tis very nectar !

It runs like life thro' every strengthen'd limb !
 Nymph of the stream, now take a grateful prayer.

THE PIG.

A COLLOQUIAL POEM.

JACOB, I do not love to see thy nose
 Turn'd up in scornful curve at yonder Pig.
 It would be well, my friend, if we, like him,
 Were perfect in our nature ; why dislike
 The sow-born grunter ?—He is obstinate,
 Thou answerest ; ugly, and the filthiest beast
 That banquets upon offal. Now, I pray you,
 Hear the Pig's Counsel.

Is he obstinate ?

We must not, Jacob, be deceived by words,—
 By sophist sounds. A democratic beast—
 He knows that his unmerciful drivers seek
 Their profit, and not his. He hath not learnt
 That Pigs were made for man—born to be brawn'd
 And baconised ; that he must please to give
 Just what his gracious masters please to take ;
 Perhaps his tusks, the weapons Nature gave
 For self-defence, the general privilege ;
 Perhaps,—Hark ! Jacob, dost thou hear that horn ?
 Woe to the young posterity of pork !
 Their enemy is at hand.

Again. Thou say'st
 The Pig-is ugly. Jacob, look at him!
 Those eyes have taught the lover flattery.
 His face,—nay, Jacob, Jacob! were it fair
 To judge a lady in her dishabille?
 Fancy it drest, and with saltpetre rouged.
 Behold his tail, my friend, with curls like that
 The wanton hop marries her stately spouse;
 So crisp in beauty Amoretta's hair
 Rings round her lover's soul the chains of love.
 And what is beauty, but the aptitude
 Of parts harmonious? Give thy fancy scope,
 And thou wilt find that no imagined change
 Can beautify this beast. Place at his end
 The starry glories of the peacock's pride;
 Give him the swan's white breast; for his horn hoofs,
 Shape such a foot and ankle as the waves
 Crowded in eager rivalry to kiss,
 When Venus from the enamour'd sea arose.
 Jacob, thou canst but make a monster of him,
 All alteration man could think, would mar
 His pig-perfection.

The last charge,—he lives
 A dirty life. Here I could shelter him
 With noble and right-reverend precedents,
 And show, by sanction of authority,
 That 'tis a very honourable thing
 To thrive by dirty ways. But let me rest
 On better ground the unanswerable defence.
 The Pig is a philosopher, who knows
 No prejudice. Dirt? Jacob, what is dirt?
 If matter, why the delicate dish that tempts
 An o'ergorged epicure to the last morsel,
 That stuffs him to the throat-gates, is no more.
 If matter be not, but as sages say,
 Spirit is all, and all things visible
 Are one—the infinitely modified.

Think, Jacob, what that Pig is, and the mire
Wherein he stands knee-deep.

And there! that breeze
Pleads with me, and has won thee to the smile
That speaks conviction. O'er yon blossom'd field
Of beans it came, and thoughts of bacon rise.

THE DANCING BEAR.

RECOMMENDED TO THE ADVOCATES FOR THE
SLAVE-TRADE.

RARE music! I would rather hear cat-courtship
Under my bed-room window in the night,
Than this scraped cat-gut's scream. Rare dancing
too!

Alas, poor Bruin! How he foots the pole,
And waddles round it with unwieldy steps
Swaying from side to side! The dancing-master
Hath had as profitless a pupil in him
As when he would have tortured my poor toes
To minuet grace, and made them move like clock-
work

In musical obedience. Bruin! Bruin!
Thou art but a clumsy biped!—and the mob
With noisy merriment mock his heavy pace,
And laugh to see him led by the nose;—themselves
Led by the nose, embruted, and in the eye
Of Reason from their Natures' purposes
As miserably pervert'd.

Bruin-Bear,
Now, could I sonnetize thy piteous plight,
And prove how much my sympathetic heart
Even for the miseries of a beast can feel,

In fourteen lines of sensibility.
 But we are told all things were made for man ;
 And I'll be sworn there's not a fellow here
 Who would not swear 'twere hanging blasphemy
 To doubt that truth. Therefore as thou wert born,
 Bruin ! for man, and man makes nothing of thee
 In any other way,—most logically
 It follows that thou must be born to dance ;
 That that great snout of thine was form'd on purpose
 To hold a ring ; and that thy fat was given thee
 Only to make pomatum !

To demur
 Were heresy. And politicians say
 (Wise men who in the scale of reason give
 No foolish feelings weight), that thou art here
 Far happier than thy brother bears who roam
 O'er trackless snow for food ; that being born
 Inferior to thy leader, unto him
 Rightly belongs dominion ; that the compact
 Was made between ye, when thy clumsy feet
 First fell into the snare, and he gave up
 His right to kill, conditioning thy life
 Should henceforth be his property—besides,
 'Tis wholesome for thy morals to be brought
 From savage climes into a civilised state,
 Into the decencies of Christendom.
 Bear ! Bear ! it passes in the Parliament
 For excellent logic this ! what if we say
 How barbarously man abuses power,
 Talk of thy baiting, it will be replied,
 Thy welfare is thy owner's interest,
 But wert thou baited it would injure thee,
 Therefore thou art not baited. For seven years—
 Hear it, O Heaven, and give ear, O Earth !
 For seven long years this precious syllogism
 Hath baffled justice and humanity !

THE FILBERT.

NAY, gather not that Filbert, Nicholas,
There is a maggot there,—it is his house,
His castle. Oh, commit not burglary !
Strip him not naked, 'tis his clothes, his shell,
His bones, the case and armour of his life,
And thou shalt do no murder, Nicholas !
It were an easy thing to crack that nut,
Or with thy crackers, or thy double teeth,
So easily may all things be destroyed !
But 'tis not in the power of mortal man,
To mend the fracture of a filbert shell.
There were two great men once amused themselves,
Watching two maggots run their wriggling race,
And wagering on their speed ; but Nick, to us
It were no sport to see the pampered worm
Roll out, and then draw in his folds of fat,
Like to some barber's leathern powder bag,
Wherewith he feathers frosts, or cauliflowers,
Spruce beau, or lady fair, or doctor grave.
Enough of dangers and of enemies,
Hath Nature's wisdom for the worm ordained ;
Increase not thou the number ! Him the mouse,
Gnawing with nibbling tooth the shell's defence,
May from his native tenement eject ;
Him may the nut-hatch piercing with strong bill
Unwittingly destroy ; or to his hoard
The squirrel bear, at leisure to be crack'd.
Man also hath his dangers and his foes,
As this poor maggot hath ; and when I muse
Upon the aches, anxieties, and fears,
The maggot knows not, Nicholas, methinks
It were a happy metamorphosis

To be enkernelled thus : never to hear
Of wars, and of invasions, and of plots,
Kings, Jacobins, and tax-commissioners ;
To feel no motion, but the wind that shook
The Filbert tree, and rock'd me to my rest ;
And in the middle of such exquisite food,
To live luxurious ! the perfection this
Of snugness ! It were to unite, at once,
Hermit retirement, aldermanic bliss,
And Stoic independence of mankind.

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